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Agenda item 7

CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE CONFERENCE

Communication dated 14 September 1981 addressed to the Secretary-General of the Conference by the delegation of India */

With reference to the report of the Credentials Committee contained in document A/CONF.104/20 of 11 September 1981, the delegation of India wishes to state that our joining the consensus in adopting this report of the Credentials Committee does not mean any change in our position as to who should represent Kampuchea. India recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and we believe that it is that Government which should have represented Kampuchea at this Conference. The Government of the so-called Democratic Kampuchea does not have the right to do so.

*/ This communication was received before the closure of the Conference, but too late for circulation during the Conference.

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REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES */

held at Paris from 1 to 14 September 1981

*/ In view of the limited time available to finalize this report and in order to ensure that the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session shall have at its disposal in sufficient time the text of the substantial New Programme of Action and related portions of the report, the report is being issued in two parts. The present document contains the introduction, part one (the text of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries and the statements made upon its adoption) and section VII of part two (the general debate). The remainder of the report will be issued in addendum 1 to the present document. The whole report will be issued subsequently as a United Nations sales publication (A/CONF.104/22/Rev.1).

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs
INTRODUCTION		
I.	Background to the Conference	1 - 6
II.	Documentation	7 - 8
PART ONE:	THE SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE 1980s FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	
	A. Text of the Substantial New Programme of Action	1 - 128
	B. Statements made upon the adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action	1 - 65
PART TWO:	PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE	
I.	Inaugural address by the President of France*/	1 - 2
II.	Opening statements (agenda item 1)*/	3 - 9
III.	Tribute to the memory of the President and Prime Minister of Iran*/	10
IV.	Statements by Heads of State*/	11 - 30
V.	Messages from Heads of State or Government*/	31
VI.	Statement by the Secretary-General of the Conference ..	32 - 37
VII.	General debate (agenda item 8).....	1 - 54
VIII.	Consideration of the reports of the individual country review meetings (agenda item 9)	38 - 39
IX.	Finalization and adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries (agenda item 10) */	40 - 43
X.	Closing statement by the President of the Conference*/	44 - 54
PART THREE:	ORGANIZATIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED MATTERS*/	
	A. Opening of the Conference (agenda item 1)*/	55
	B. Election of the President (agenda item 2)*/	56
	C. Adoption of the rules of procedure (agenda item 3)*/	57
	D. Report of the Chairman of the Consultation among Senior Officials */	58
	E. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work (agenda item 4)*/	59 - 63
	F. Establishment of sessional bodies (agenda item 5)*/	64 - 75
	1. Report on the work of Committee I	65 - 71
	2. Report on the work of Committee II.....	72 - 75

*/ Issued in A/CONF.104/22/Add.1

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs
G.	Election of officers other than the President (agenda item 6) */	76 - 77
H.	Credentials of representatives to the Conference (agenda item 7)*/	78 - 85
	1. Appointment of members of the Credentials Committee	78
	2. Report of the Credentials Committee	79 - 85
I.	Appointment of "Friends of the Rapporteur-General"*/	86
J.	Attendance*/	87 - 92
K.	Financial implications of the decisions of the Conference */	93
L.	Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of France (agenda item 11) */	94 - 95
M.	Adoption of the report of the Conference (agenda item 12) */	96
N.	Closure of the Conference	97

Annexes*/

I. Resolutions adopted by the Conference

1. Consideration of the reports of the individual country review meetings

2. Credentials of representatives to the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

3. Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of France

II. Report of the Credentials Committee

III. List of heads of State or delegation, chief executive officers of intergovernmental bodies, and other representatives and observers who made statements during the general debate

IV. Checklist of documents

*/ Issued in A/CONF.104/22/Add.1

INTRODUCTION

I. Background to the Conference

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 34/203 of 19 December 1979, decided to convene the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 1981 to finalize, adopt and support the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries outlined in UNCTAD resolution 122 (V). In the same resolution it designated UNCTAD's Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries to act as the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and designated the Secretary-General of UNCTAD as Secretary-General of the Conference.

2. The Preparatory Committee welcomed the offer of the Government of France to host the Conference in Paris and made detailed recommendations on the organization of the United Nations Conference. These recommendations were subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/205 of 16 December 1980, in which the Assembly also accepted the offer of the Government of France to act as host for the Conference.

3. The Preparatory Committee decided to make individual least developed country reviews the basis for the preparations for the Conference. 1/ Accordingly, each least developed country was invited to prepare a presentation of its development programme for the 1980s, for review at individual meetings with its development partners. The Conference secretariat sent missions to almost all of the least developed countries to discuss these preparations. Specific inputs were provided by the Conference secretariat with the support of UNDP, bilateral sources and other United Nations organizations, in collaboration with the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation.

4. Each least developed country was left to decide which countries and multilateral agencies or other bodies it wished to invite to its review meeting.

5. In accordance with the decisions taken by the Preparatory Committee, four rounds of consultations were organized for the least developed countries and their development partners with the financial support of several countries. 2/ The presentations of the least developed countries of Asia and the Pacific were reviewed in Vienna from 30 March to 10 April 1981; those of Eastern Africa in Addis Ababa from 4 to 15 May 1981; those of Western and Central Africa and of Somalia in The Hague from 25 May to 5 June 1981; and those of Southern Africa, of Guinea-Bissau and of Haiti in Geneva from 22 to 26 June 1981. 3/

1/ The Preparatory Committee held three sessions, the first from 4 to 16 February 1980, the second from 9 to 17 October 1980 and the third from 29 June to 10 July 1981. For the reports on the first and second sessions see Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth session, Supplement No. 45 (A/35/45); for that on the third session see A/CONF.104/PC/19 and Add.1-8 (to be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No.45 (A/36/45).

2/ Austria, Canada, Finland, Netherlands and Sweden.

3/ For the reports of these review meetings see A/CONF.104/3, 4, 5 and 6, respectively.

6. Additional preparations for the Conference at the regional level included the first meeting of the Conference of Ministers of African least developed countries, held in Addis Ababa from 26 to 30 July 1981, and the Ministerial meeting of member States of ESCAP and ECWA in Bangkok from 10 to 11 August 1981. 4/

II. Documentation

7. In addition to the reports of the Preparatory Committee and of the review meetings and one of the regional meetings referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 above, the Conference had before it a number of other documents as a basis for its work:

(a) A report by the Secretary-General of the Conference entitled "The least developed countries in the 1980s" (A/CONF.104/2 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Corr.1 and Add.2 and Corr.1 and Add.3);

(b) A synopsis of the proposals made at the third session of the Preparatory Committee on the draft Substantial New Programme of Action (SNPA), prepared by the Chairman of the Committee at the request of the Committee (A/CONF.104/L.1);

(c) A draft resolution, submitted on the eve of the Conference by Peru on behalf of the States members of the Group of 77, containing a draft text of the SNPA (A/CONF.104/L.2);

(d) Basic data and other tables on least developed countries, prepared by the Conference secretariat (A/CONF.104/9 and Corr.1 and A/CONF.104/PC/15 and Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2);

(e) Summaries of the country presentations made to the review meetings (series A/CONF.104/SP/...);

(f) Contributions to the Conference by organizations of the United Nations system (A/CONF.104/7 and Add.1-25);

(g) A consultant's paper, prepared at the request of the Conference secretariat, on the role of non-governmental organizations in aid to the least developed countries (A/CONF.104/8).

8. During the Conference some delegations circulated as official documents further information on their countries' activities in the field of assistance to the least developed countries. 5/

4/ For the report of the Bangkok meeting see A/CONF.104/12.

5/ For the check-list of documents see annex IV.

PART ONE. THE SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE 1980s FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

A. Text of the Substantive New Programme of Action 6/

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs
PREAMBLE		
Chapter		
I.	GENERAL SITUATION AND NATIONAL MEASURES	1 - 59
A.	Food and agriculture	9 - 19
1.	Food strategies	10
2.	Food security	11 - 12
3.	Food production	13 - 14
4.	Forestry, fisheries and livestock	15 - 17
5.	Rural development	18 - 19
B.	Human resources and social development	20 - 40
1.	Human resources	21 - 23
2.	Education and culture	24 - 26
3.	Training and administration	27 - 34
4.	Health and nutrition	35 - 37
5.	Population policies	38 - 39
6.	Human settlement	40
C.	Natural resources and energy	41 - 45
D.	Manufacturing industry	46 - 48
E.	Physical and institutional infrastructure	49 - 50
F.	Environment	51 - 52
G.	Transformational investments	53 - 54
H.	Land-locked and island least developed countries	55
I.	Foreign trade	56 - 58
J.	Disaster assistance for least developed countries	59

6/ Adopted by the Conference at its 19th (closing) meeting on 14 September 1981 (see part II, section IX).

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Paragraphs
II.	INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES	60 - 108
	A. Transfer of financial resources	61 - 71
	1. Financial assistance requirements and policies	61 - 64
	2. Increased allocations to least developed countries in multilateral programmes	65 - 67
	3. New mechanisms for increased financial transfers to the least developed countries	68 - 69
	4. Aid modalities	70 - 71
	B. Immediate action component of the Substantial New Programme of Action	72
	C. Technical assistance	73
	D. Other international economic policy measures	74 - 108
	1. Commercial policy measures	74 - 83
	2. Transport and communications	84 - 96
	3. Food and agriculture	97 - 102
	4. Transfer and development of technology	103 - 104
	5. Multicountry schemes	105 - 108
III.	ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION, FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING	109 - 128
	A. National level	110 - 116
	B. Regional and global levels	117 - 128

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international co-operation,

Recalling resolution 122 (V) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development adopted at Manila on 3 June 1979, in which it decided as one of its major priorities to launch a Comprehensive New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in two phases, an Immediate Action Programme (1979-1981) and a Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, and which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/210 of 19 December 1980,

Recognizing that primary responsibility for their development rests with the least developed countries themselves,

Recalling further that the objective of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries is to transform their economies toward self-sustained development and enable them to provide at least internationally accepted minimum standards of nutrition, health, transport and communications, housing and education as well as job opportunities to all their citizens, and particularly to the rural and urban poor,

Noting with appreciation that some developed countries have taken positive steps towards the implementation of resolution 122 (V) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

Expressing deepest concern that, even more than two years after the adoption of the Immediate Action Programme (1979-1981) contained in the aforesaid resolution, very limited progress has been made towards its implementation,

Reaffirming the necessity of stable peace for the economic and social development of the least developed countries and the significance of the real steps taken in the field of disarmament for the substantial extension of the possibilities to increase assistance for the development of these countries,

Reaffirming also that urgent action should be taken by all the members of the international community to end without delay colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, interference in internal affairs, apartheid, racial discrimination, hegemony, expansionism and all forms of foreign aggression and occupation, which constitute major obstacles to the economic emancipation and development of the developing countries,

Noting with great concern that the least developed countries as a group have experienced very low growth and that some of these countries have even recorded negative growth-rates during the Second United Nations Development Decade,

Reaffirming that there is an immediate need for a greatly expanded programme, including a major increase in the transfer of additional resources, to meet the critical needs of the least developed countries and to help them promote more rapid socio-economic development,

Underlining that external support should be forthcoming from developed countries, developing countries in a position to do so, multilateral development institutions and other sources,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 34/203 of 19 December 1979 which decided to convene a United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries with the objective of finalizing, adopting and supporting the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries,

Recognizing that the immediate action component of the Substantial New Programme of Action is crucial for the implementation of the Programme of Action,

Recognizing also that the emergency situation affecting the least developed countries requires immediate and adequate assistance,

Emphasizing the particular importance of the contribution that economic co-operation among developing countries and technical co-operation among developing countries can make, inter alia, to the development of the least developed among them,

Noting the target of a 7 per cent annual rate of growth of gross domestic product for the developing countries as a whole during the Decade and not less than 7.5 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, for exports and imports of goods and services set forth in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, 7/

Noting further that the Strategy states, inter alia, that "as an essential priority within the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, the least developed countries - the economically weakest and poorest countries with the most formidable structural problems - require a special programme of sufficient size and intensity consistent with their national plans and priorities to make a decisive break from their past and present situation and their bleak prospects". 8/

Decides to adopt and recommends the immediate implementation of the following Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries, including the necessary international support measures, which would be undertaken within the framework of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade and other relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolution 122 (V) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, General Assembly resolutions S-11/4 and 35/205, consistent with the plans and programmes of each least developed country and as a part of international action for the establishment of a new international economic order:

7/ General Assembly resolution 35/56, annex.

8/ Ibid., para. 136.

SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE 1980s
FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Chapter I

GENERAL SITUATION AND NATIONAL MEASURES

1. The totally inadequate levels of living that now exist in the least developed countries are a cause for grave concern to the international community. The means for overcoming acute hunger and malnutrition, disease, illiteracy and all other manifestations of poverty should be made available to these countries. The least developed countries have primary responsibility for their over-all development and the domestic policies they pursue will be of critical importance for the success of their development efforts. However, the international community, in particular the developed countries and relevant international organizations as well as the developing countries in a position to do so, and non-governmental organizations, will have to provide substantial assistance to these countries to overcome their poverty. Concerted international action in support of national efforts is required to bring about structural transformation of the economies of the least developed countries, to reverse current trends towards a decline in per capita food production, to accelerate agricultural and industrial growth, to promote the development and improved utilization of human resources, to achieve sustained and self-reliant development, and to provide for increased and direct expenditures on the improvement of socio-economic conditions during the 1980s. Efforts must be expanded in order to ensure broadly-based participation in development, concurrent and consistent with the equitable distrbution of the gains from socio-economic development.

2. Transformations as necessary have to be effected with regard to the full sovereignty of least developed countries over their national resources, the establishment of a system of social and economic planning and programming and the implementation of socio-economic reform.

3. The least developed countries are the poorest and economically weakest of the developing countries, with the most formidable structural problems. The main structural characteristics of the least developed countries, which are the sources of their extreme economic and social difficulties are the following:

(a) Very low income per head, with the human needs of the bulk of the population unsatisfied;

(b) Very high proportion of the population in the subsistence sectors;

(c) High rate of population growth, compared with the areas currently cultivated under sound conditions;

(d) Extremely low agricultural productivity and weak agricultural support, particularly for crop farming and livestock production;

(e) Extremely low level of exploitation of natural resources - minerals, energy, etc. (because of lack of knowledge or lack of financing and skills for their development);

(f) Very limited development of cottage and other industries;

(g) Low rates of activity in rural areas and increasing urban unemployment;

(h) An acute scarcity of skilled personnel at all levels;

(i) Very weak institutional and physical infrastructure of all kinds (including administration, education, training, health, housing, transport and communications, etc.);

(j) Most of the least developed countries suffer from one or more major geographical or climatological handicaps, such as land-lockedness, insularity, drought and desertification, or high exposure to cyclones, floods and other natural disasters.

4. As stated in resolution 122 (V) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the main objectives of the Substantial New Programme of Action are:

- to promote the structural changes necessary to overcome the least developed countries' extreme economic difficulties;

- to provide fully adequate and internationally accepted minimum standards for the poor;

- to identify and support major investment opportunities and priorities;

- to mitigate as far as possible the adverse effects of natural disasters.

5. The per capita gross domestic product of the least developed countries as a group is very low, with the bulk of the population far below any internationally accepted minimum standard of living. In 1979 average per capita gross domestic product of these countries amounted to $183, compared to $674 for all developing countries, $3,731 for socialist countries of Eastern Europe and $8,127 for developed market-economy countries. During the period 1960-1970 and 1970-1979 per capita gross domestic product of this group of countries increased at an annual rate of only 0.3 per cent and 0.7 per cent, respectively, compared to 2.6 per cent and 2.9 per cent, respectively, for all developing countries and 5.6 per cent and 4.7 per cent, respectively, for socialist countries of Eastern Europe and 4.0 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively for developed-market economy countries. The situation will be even more critical if measures to reverse past trends are not implemented immediately by the least developed countries and by the international community. Therefore, during the 1980s every effort must be made to implement programmes and projects which will enable each least developed country to increase its national income substantially - even in appropriate cases doubling it by 1990 as compared to the level reached in the late 1970s, which would require an annual growth rate of 7.2 per cent - and to ensure that the poorest parts of the population fully benefit from such improvements. Such a growth of income deriving from efforts by both the least developed countries and by the international community is necessary in order to provide a minimum standard of living for the entire population of these countries.

6. In this context least developed countries will set themselves appropriate objectives. In the agricultural sector, they must aim to progress towards and if possible surpass the 4 per cent average annual growth target set in the International Development Strategy for all developing countries so that food production in each country increases faster than population growth with a view to guaranteeing food security. Concerning manufacturing, the least developed countries should aim to increase their overall annual growth of output to 9 per cent or more. Least developed countries should, moreover, seek to achieve a more substantial share of world trade. They should also continue to evolve a set of social objectives in such fields as nutrition, school enrolment, literacy and the fight against endemic diseases.

7. The planning framework in the least developed countries will be a key element in their efforts to apply scarce resources to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Substantial New Programme of Action. In keeping with the different characteristics and problems of the various countries, each will have its own approach to development planning, but may consider paying attention to (a) strengthening national planning bodies; (b) establishing a relationship between any central planning body and key development agencies; (c) the linkage between development financing and recurrent expenditure programming; and (d) providing for identification and costing of suitable projects and programmes and their subsequent monitoring and evaluation along with statistical reporting to planning authorities.

8. In the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action the least developed countries will be required to mobilize domestic financial resources in addition to international support. They should consider measures which would facilitate efforts aiming at raising the level of their domestic savings rate.

A. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

9. Agriculture and fisheries feature among the essential social and economic priorities for the development of the least developed countries, both as a means of satisfying the most fundamental human needs and as a basis for economic growth. Although more than 80 per cent of the people in these countries depend on agriculture for their livelihood and on an average 50 per cent of gross domestic product originates in this sector, productivity in agriculture is extremely low because of several bottlenecks, including inappropriate, defective and inefficient techniques of production as well as very weak agricultural support institutions and lack of infrastructure and other agricultural inputs. In addition, in many of these countries agriculture is specially vulnerable because of the threat of desertification and because of very limited irrigation facilities as well as of the vagaries of nature. The performance of most of these countries in this sector during the last two decades has been characterized by negative growth of per capita food and agricultural output. Many have also experienced rapid population growth compounded by rural exodus, increased urbanization, chronic food insecurity, stagnant or deteriorating nutrition well below minimum standards, a stationary volume of agricultural exports with declining terms of trade, and rapidly rising imports of food and agricultural commodities, especially cereals.

1. Food strategies

10. In view of the above situation, it is necessary that the agricultural sector continue to receive the highest priority in the national development strategies of the least developed countries. In particular, one of the first objectives for these countries should be to increase their food production so as to improve the

nutritional situation of their populations, especially the most vulnerable groups, and diminish their dependence on external supplies. In this context, the World Food Council has emphasized the concept of a national food strategy in the context of national programmes in order to raise food issues to the highest policy levels and ensure a more co-ordinated approach to all aspects of food production and distribution, nutrition and national food security. Within the framework of their national development priorities and programmes, least developed countries should therefore prepare strategies, plans and policies for the agricultural sector, giving particular attention to food production and distribution, which will:

- provide a framework for the identification and preparation of investment projects and help mobilize additional domestic investment resources and external financing; and

- aim at attaining greater food self-sufficiency as soon as possible and thereby at eliminating hunger and malnutrition as rapidly as possible and at the latest by 1990.

2. Food security

11. Achievement of food security should clearly be one of the prime objectives in the agricultural sector. This requires that adequate food supplies be reliably accessible at prices that can be afforded by those who require them. To achieve the goal of food security in the least developed countries, programme and policy action at the national level is required, as well as the help of the international community, as is emphasized in the Plan of Action on World Food Security endorsed by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.2/

12. Every least developed country should take important initiatives to reduce its dependence on food imports, more particularly because of the changes they entail in food consumption patterns and the various dislocations they may lead to in the food sector of the developing countries and the need to reduce foreign exchange outlays. In addition to the primary objectives of increasing agricultural production, initiatives should include efforts to expand and appropriately distribute local, national, subregional and regional food stocks, taking into consideration capacities and techniques at the local level; to train personnel in the management of these stocks; and to strengthen early warning systems through improved information gathering and reporting on food crops and on stocks.

3. Food production

13. The pre-condition for an improvement in food production is the demonstration of a strong political will (a) to direct adequately, and where necessary to increase budgetary resources to agriculture as well as to related activities such as livestock production, fishing and forestry; (b) to institute policies, especially on prices, which inter alia, will provide incentives for production, achieve an appropriate balance between crops for domestic consumption and crops for export and encourage small farmers and co-operatives to increase productivity; (c) to set up effective mechanisms for the drawing-up and implementation of the necessary programmes. Major emphasis in the decade of the 1980s will be given to increasing substantially agricultural production, aiming at an annual rate of an increase of 4 per cent or more.

2/ FAO Conference resolution 3/79. For the text of the Plan of Action see FAO Council resolution 1/75, annex.

14. In conformity with the Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (Rome, 12-20 July, 1979), 10/ the least developed countries will pay particular attention to the following:

(a) Expanding the acreage of cultivable land wherever possible;

(b) Seeking appropriate solutions to structural problems of land tenure;

(c) The improvement of productivity through the conservation of soil, provision of irrigation and drainage, and the use of appropriate tools, fertilizers and improved varieties of seeds;

(d) The development of indigenous farming techniques and, to the greatest extent possible, the reduction of dependence of the rural sector on imported inputs;

(e) The strengthening of national research, including the dissemination of research findings already available;

(f) Training of the necessary manpower at all levels;

(g) The development of physical infrastructure such as rural roads and communications and storage facilities;

(h) The reduction of post-harvest losses;

(i) The improvement and strengthening of arrangements for rural credit, agricultural input supply and marketing and extension services;

(j) The application of appropriate pricing policies to provide the necessary incentives to production.

4. Forestry, fisheries and livestock

15. Forestry is by far the most important source of fuel and the principal source of construction material in the least developed countries. Forest products are also important as supplementary food and animal feed. Scarcity of funds and skilled manpower have hampered the development and rational utilization of forest potential in these countries. At the same time, there has been widespread depletion of forest resources with resulting damage to watersheds, increased frequency and intensity of flooding, drought, desertification and loss of soil fertility. It is, therefore, necessary that the plans and programmes give emphasis to forest resource management through replenting, up-grading of infrastructure of extraction techniques and of skills of forestry sector personnel.

16. Fish resources, both inland and marine, have considerable potential in several least developed countries and their planned exploitation will augment domestic protein supply and export earnings. In the decade of the 1980s the least developed countries will undertake programmes to introduce modern fishing vessels and gear, to develop fish landing and storage facilities and upgrade fishing and marketing techniques, and to undertake comprehensive fish resource surveys.

10/ See Report of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Rome, 12-20 July 1979 (WCARRD/REP); transmitted to the members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/34/485).

17. Despite the vital role of livestock as the major source of animal protein, of draft power for agriculture, of income for the non-farm rural families and of export earnings, methods of stock management and animal slaughtering continue to be primitive in the least developed countries. Shortage of animal feed, water and pasture lands and recurrence of animal diseases have led to the depletion of stock in many of these countries. Therefore, efforts will be made during the 1980s to improve animal breeding, to develop modern dairy farms for milk and meat production, and to improve ranch management, including the introduction of high-yielding feed varieties and control of animal diseases.

5. Rural development

18. Given that the least developed countries are essentially rural societies in which the majority of the population lives in rural areas, it is clear that there cannot be real social and economic development in these countries unless the standard of living of the rural population improves. In the context, therefore, of the high priority to be given to comprehensive and integrated rural development, every effort must be made to encourage the active and organized participation of the populations concerned in determining and evaluating, as well as in implementing, agrarian reforms in the programme of rural development with a view to increasing their over-all involvement, ensuring a wider sharing of benefits, increasing employment opportunities and raising productivity, and enhancing social infrastructures in rural areas, which will help stem rural urban migration. The programmes and projects will cover the strengthening of rural institutions and upgrading of skills (as set out above), primary and vocational education and functional literacy, planning and implementation of local projects and promotion of rural industries and service centres. Taking due account of the need to preserve and maintain natural resources by respecting the ecological balance, they should also seek to promote a diversification of economic activities and to ensure that economic development is paralleled by the promotion of the necessary social infrastructures in the areas of primary health and sanitation, safe water supplies and adequate housing. Since these programmes and projects should as far as possible be labour and local-cost intensive, they will call for appropriate support in terms of the assistance needed from specialized experts and for flexible modes of financing.

19. Within the framework of a transformation of rural life in its economic, social, cultural, institutional and human aspects, policies are needed which recognize the role of women in rural development and ensure their equitable access to productive resources, especially land and water resources and to inputs, markets and services.

B. HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

20. Development is an integrated process, embodying both economic and social objectives. The primary aim of development must be the continuing improvement in the well-being of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the development process and a fair distribution of the benefits therefrom.

1. Human resources

21. The development of human resources provides a requisite for economic and social development. Full and effective participation by the entire population at all stages of the development process should be ensured. Shortage of skilled personnel of all kinds and administrative and managerial capacity are major constraints in the

development process in the least developed countries, seriously limiting and weakening their planning, programming and implementation machinery. There is therefore an urgent need for these countries to mobilize fully their human resources through education, training in required skills, in planning and in production and management techniques. To achieve such a mobilization of human resources, it will be necessary to provide incentives both for individual development and in the interests of the community.

22. Required programmes and institutions should be established or strengthened for total human resources mobilization and the provision of trained and qualified national personnel. In achieving the objective of full employment intensive efforts will have to be made to increase opportunities for productive employment and to reduce and eliminate massive unemployment and underemployment.

23. Women play an indispensable role in the development process. Appropriate measures must be taken to pursue the objective of strengthening women's equal participation both as agents and as beneficiaries in all sectors and at all levels of development planning, monitoring and implementation. Sufficient attention must be paid to women's access to property. The least developed countries should, within the framework of their development plans and priorities, and as an important contribution to the achievement of their development goals, formulate policies and programmes aimed at enhancing the role of women in the development process.

2. Education and culture

24. The high and persistent levels of illiteracy in the least developed countries, as well as limited possibilities for basic education, are serious obstacles to improved economic performance and social standards.

25. Efforts should be made in the least developed countries during the 1980s for reducing the absolute numbers of illiterates and out-of-school children, and thus to move more rapidly towards the achievement of universal enrolment at the primary level and universal literacy. These countries should aim at making primary education free and compulsory by 1990 at the latest. At the same time, greater effort will have to be made to improve the quality and efficiency of primary education and to provide for post-literacy maintenance. The least developed countries will need to pursue a balanced development of the various types and levels of education, including secondary and vocational training as well as adequate facilities for higher-level education, in view of the extreme shortage of skilled personnel of all types in these countries.

26. The above programme should combine the resources of school and out-of-school education, reducing disparities which operate to the disadvantage of rural populations and socially under-privileged groups, enhancing the cultural relevance of education and ensuring the preservation and enhancement of cultural identity and values as an essential part of national development, etc. Due attention will be given to meeting the educational needs of women to enable them to develop their full potential.

3. Training and administration

27. Weakness in planning, programming and implementation machinery and shortage of skilled manpower and administrative and managerial capacity are major constraints on the development process in the least developed countries.

28. Vocational training must also be developed so as to respond to the quantitative and qualitative requirements of the economy for skills of all kinds, technical, managerial and administrative.

29. Within the over-all problem of the mobilization of human resources, the strengthening of the public service should be among the highest priorities in the development plans of the least developed countries.

30. Supported in particular by other developing countries who are or have been confronted with comparable problems the least developed countries should draw up plans to initiate or strengthen training institutions on a national or regional basis. This will include specified in-service training in order to reach a situation in which a satisfactory number of competent administrators are available to support the development efforts. These institutions should cover specialized areas such as training, planning and evaluation, financial management, agricultural and industrial development and technical management of parastatal enterprises. These plans should also contain proposals to multilateral and bilateral donors, requiring financial or technical aid or other forms of international co-operation, not only to support the long-term training plans but also to provide assistance for the immediate emergency situation of a lack of trained manpower for the many functions to be fulfilled in the implementation of an integrated development programme.

31. Programmes for training and skill improvement will have to be undertaken to respond to the quantitative and qualitative requirements of the economies of the least developed countries for skills of all kinds, technical, managerial and administrative. While awaiting results of training programmes, technical assistance will be utilized to meet immediate manpower needs.

32. Technical co-operation is a particularly effective means for other developing countries with relevant expertise and experience to assist the least developed countries in initiating or strengthening their training institutions, including in-service training and improving regional information systems.

33. The strengthening of administrative capacity and of institutions, particularly those with access to the most economically disadvantaged groups in the least developed countries, is crucial for realizing the full potential of the development projects and programmes and for ensuring that all sectors of the population are in a position to benefit from economic growth.

34. Concerted efforts will be made aiming at minimizing the negative impact of the migration of skilled personnel.

4. Health and nutrition

35. The health and nutrition standards in the least developed countries are the lowest in the world and are a serious impediment to their socio-economic development.

36. A high priority should be placed on improving nutrition and health in the least developed countries, including the designing of food security programmes, particularly in view of the fact that their per capita food intake and health services are the lowest in the world.

37. National policies, strategies and plans of action in the field of health should therefore be formulated and implemented through the mobilization of all available resources as part of the Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000 adopted unanimously by States members of the World Health Organization. 11/ These strategies and actions should be based on the concept of primary health care and particular importance should be placed on efforts to provide by 1990 safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, immunization of all children against major infectious diseases, as well as the necessary caloric and protein intake. Primary health care should also include education concerning prevailing health problems and the methods of preventing and controlling them; proper nutrition; maternal and child care, including family planning; prevention and control of locally endemic diseases and appropriate treatment of common diseases and injuries; and provision of essential drugs.

5. Population policies

38. The rapid rate of population growth in a number of the least developed countries during the past decade has made it extremely difficult for governments to achieve their development goals.

39. Population policies should be considered an integral part of over-all development policies. Within the framework of national demographic policies, countries will take appropriate measures for family planning and population control. Emphasis will be given to biomedical and social science research into safer, more efficient and more widely acceptable techniques of family planning. Attention will also be paid to motivational activities, population education, information and efficient delivery services. The voluntary nature of population control measures should be upheld and promoted. Possibilities for the full participation of both men and women in population programmes should be created or increased.

6. Human settlement

40. Housing requirements in the least developed countries, in particular in urban areas, are massive. Disorganized human settlement is simultaneously a threat to environment and an obstacle to improvement of its quality as well as to provision of modern services. The interrelationship begween people, resources, environment and development will be a basic concern in developing human settlements and undertaking development projects. Better use of land and environment in planning urban and rural settlements and locating industrial and agricultural projects, securing interregional balance between urban and rural development, improving housing conditions for the most disadvantaged regions and communities, and provision of basic shelter and infrastructure at low cost in urban and rural areas should guide the policies for development of housing and settlement. Capital expenditure on urban housing alone will have to increase substantially.

11/ World Health Assembly resolution 34.36.

C. NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY

41. Natural resources constitute one of the most important potential factors in the economic and social development of the least developed countries, but the level of exploitation and development of natural resources is extremely low in almost all the least developed countries because of lack of geological knowledge or lack of financing and shortage of skills for their development. Use of water resources for the purpose of irrigation, drinking water supply and generation of electricity is extremely limited. Many of the least developed countries have mineral deposits and energy resources which thus far have remained unexploited. Potentials for the utilization of solar, wind, hydroelectric and other renewable energy resources have remained untapped. In most of these countries, development and promotion of all local energy resources is in a nascent stage. The least developed countries have placed emphasis in their development plans for the 1980s on the exploration and exploitation of their natural resources, particularly minerals, energy and water resource potentials. Where such potentials are identified during the decade, programmes for their exploitation on a commercial or other viable basis should be expeditiously initiated and supported. Least developed countries should receive substantial financial and technical assistance in this regard. They should also be adequately assisted towards completing geological surveys and mapping of mineral and energy resources of their countries by 1990.

42. The Conference views with concern the energy problems of the least developed countries. Together with other critical problems, such as the need for increased imports of manufactured goods, high rates of inflation and unfavourable terms of trade, the need for various forms of energy, as well as the rapid depletion of their traditional energy resources, presents serious constraints to both short-term and long-term development of the least developed countries.

43. A major effort will be needed to increase domestic energy supplies in order to meet the increasing demands imposed by the development process. For this purpose the least developed countries may wish to consider integrating a comprehensive energy strategy into their over-all development plans. To promote efficient allocation and development of energy resources, such an approach would incorporate sound domestic energy policies in accordance with their own circumstances. In this context, transfer, adaptation and application of technology, conservation, reforestation in desertified areas and maintenance of existing forests are also important.

44. With reference to the Nairobi Programme of Action on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, 12/ special consideration should be given to the implementation of the specific measures which are recommended therein for priority action with particular reference to the least developed countries, taking into consideration the rapid depletion of traditional energy sources such as fuelwood, charcoal and animal waste; this situation also has grave consequences for the environment.

45. All developed countries, developing countries in a position to do so, multilateral institutions and other sources should provide financial and technical assistance for the research, exploration and development of energy resources in the least developed countries.

12/ See the report of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy (Nairobi, Kenya), 10-21 August 1981 (A/CONF.100/11), chap. I.

D. MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

46. In most of the least developed countries the contribution of manufacturing industry to gross domestic product is at present about 9 per cent and in a considerable number of cases even as low as 4-5 per cent. The annual growth rate of manufacturing value added per capita was only 3.4 per cent during the 1970s for the least developed countries, as compared with 4.7 per cent for developing countries, 6.8 per cent for the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and 4 per cent for the developed market-economy countries.

47. In view of the low share of manufacturing in gross domestic product in the least developed countries, they should aim to increase their growth of manufacturing output to an overall annual rate of 9 per cent or more. A special effort supported by the international community and the United Nations agencies concerned, will be needed to achieve this objective.

48. As part of the objective of greater economic diversification and rapid economic growth, least developed countries will undertake more ambitious programmes of industrial development, and in particular will:

- develop agro-based and agro-support industries and on-the-spot processing, as appropriate;

- build up medium and light industries to meet the growing needs of their populations for essential consumer goods;

- encourage and improve productivity in small-scale and cottage industries, utilizing where appropriate non-governmental organizations, through the introduction of appropriate technology and through the supply of credit and materials and marketing arrangements;

- encourage the establishment of basic industries with indigenous resources, where feasible.

E. PHYSICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

49. The least developed countries have very weak institutional and physical infrastructure of all kinds and their substantial improvement is essential for rapid economic development. In all of these countries, except in a few cities and towns, most areas are not served by modern transport and communications, and electric power is non-existent.

50. A major emphasis is therefore placed on the development of the basic physical infrastructure needed to support the improvement of all productive sectors as well as to support essential social services. These include transport and communications, ports and airports, water, irrigation, electric power development, storage and distribution facilities, hospital and school buildings, housing, etc., which are crucial to the structural transformation of the least developed countries.

F. ENVIRONMENT

51. The preservation of the natural resources available to the least developed countries is also of prime importance for their future development. Desertification, deforestation, soil and water degradation have reached enormous proportions in the 1970s. For many least developed countries these environmental changes have had direct and serious detrimental effects on their development efforts. Health, nutrition and general well-being depend upon the integrity and productivity of the environment and resources.

52. Fundamental to safeguarding the environment is the full understanding of the interrelationship between people, resources, environment and development. This interrelationship clearly points to the necessity of an integrated approach to development in general and development projects in particular, on the part of the least developed countries themselves and of external donors.

G. TRANSFORMATIONAL INVESTMENTS

53. Given the very low levels of per capita income and the difficulties of internal resource mobilization in the least developed countries, the prospects for important improvements can be markedly enhanced by investments, with the substantial assistance of the international community, in transformational projects. The present low level of exploitation of basic resources, including land, offers investment opportunities in some of the least developed countries for very large projects which can by themselves transform the economies from a low level of operation to a substantially higher level. Such investments are very costly but the pay-off, when they are successfully completed, can be extremely large, especially if they are undertaken at the subregional level.

54. The least developed countries, with assistance from multilateral organizations, should seek to identify such major investment projects for leading the way to the substantial transformations that are necessary if ambitious growth and welfare targets are to be realized. There is, for example, scope for such projects in comprehensive agricultural development, in irrigation and feasible river basic developments, in development of transport and communications and in the exploration and development of the mineral and energy resource potentials of the least developed countries. Where the findings of adequate feasibility and related studies highlight the advisability of transformational investments at the economic and social level, they should be made promptly as an effective means of promoting sustained growth and the welfare of the population.

H. LAND-LOCKED AND ISLAND LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

55. Fifteen of the 31 least developed countries are also land-locked and therefore face additional problems in their development. In order to alleviate this geographical handicap these countries and their transit neighbours in co-operation with each other should make, during the 1980s, immediate and intensive efforts to simplify transit procedures and to improve transit-transport, storage and port facilities for their international trade, taking into account the needs and means of the land-locked least developed countries and their transit neighbours. Similarly, the five least developed countries which are islands should initiate programmes with the support of the international community for the development of their feeder transport services in order to improve their access to world markets.

I. FOREIGN TRADE

56. The extremely low absolute level of export receipts for the least developed countries, as well as their fluctuation and the resulting sharp limitation on the capacity of these countries to import, is one of their major structural handicaps. Special efforts are needed to ensure and promote adequate markets for their expanded production. The objectives in the field of foreign trade include increased export earnings through increased production in both the traditional and the modern sectors of the economy, through diversification of the commodity structure and direction of trade, securing remunerative prices of export commodities as well as expansion of trade among developing countries.

57. In the context of market expansion, least developed countries should undertake the following activities with international assistance and co-operation as outlined in paragraph 80 below:

(a) Comprehensive efforts ranging from planning to production and marketing, based on supply as well as demand analyses at the national, regional, interregional and global levels;

(b) Preparation of national export development plans and objectives and formulation of export development strategies and policies, including identification and utilization of new export production and marketing possibilities;

(c) Establishment and strengthening of national infrastructure for marketing and trade promotion services, such as trade information, quality control, export packaging, storage and stocking facilities, export financing, trade documentation, shipping, air-freighting and insurance;

(d) Formulation of national import procurement policies and drawing up import procurement plans, including import techniques and operations, supplies management and warehousing, in order to ensure the optimum utilization of scarce foreign exchange resources;

(e) Monitoring and evaluation of the trading prospects, including market access for the least developed countries in the context of the tariff and non-tariff barriers, secular changes in the commodity structure in world trade and growth trends in commodities of special export importance to them;

(f) Analysis and elaboration of the position of the least developed countries in multilateral trade negotiations and strengthening their negotiating capability;

(g) Carrying out national, regional, interregional and global supply and demand studies to identify the scope of trade expansion;

(h) Establishment of training programmes designed to overcome the acute shortage of skilled manpower in the field of foreign trade operations.

58. National action should also be taken to realize, through greater efficiency in the organization and operation of the carriage of foreign trade, cost reductions in all links in the transport chain.

J. DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

59. The least developed countries, in addition to other misfortunes, are susceptible to major natural disasters, e.g., drought, desertification, floods, cyclones and earthquakes. Further, there are also man-made disasters that create sudden disruption of production and distribution as well as loss of lives and property.

(a) The resource base of the least developed countries being limited, when a major natural calamity strikes, their development programmes are jeopardized, resulting in a large diversion of funds and other resources from development programmes to food imports and rehabilitation programmes. The capacity to absorb the shock of recurring natural disasters is severely limited in least developed countries. In fact, in cases like prolonged drought, major floods or cyclones, the affected countries' capability to renew their developmental efforts regresses by several years. Per capita loss caused by natural calamities is estimated to be many times greater in the least developed countries than among industrialized nations, apart from very high death rates.

(b) The fullest use should be made of all existing arrangements for the provision of emergency assistance and action should be taken, where considered appropriate, for their improvement or for new arrangements in order to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, including those resulting in unforeseen shortfalls in resource mobilization, and thus to minimize their adverse effects on the development process so as to allow the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s to go forward on schedule as far as possible.

(c) It is, therefore, also essential that resources be made available speedily by donor countries and by bodies, organs and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as by concerned multilateral agencies and the international community in general, for rendering assistance whenever such a natural calamity strikes, rather than responding to appeals after the calamity has occurred. This will enable the least developed countries, who have very limited resources at their disposal, to continue their progress as soon as the after-effects of the natural calamities have been tackled.

(d) Assistance should also be provided to minimize damage caused by natural hazards. Full use should be made of advances in modern technology and agrometeorology, such as early warning systems and long-term forecasts for warning the people of the prospective affected areas about the possibility of floods, cyclones or droughts. Relevant United Nations organizations should effectively assist the least developed countries in building up within their countries facilities for dissemination of information in a speedy manner and necessary protective measures to minimize damage.

(e) Least developed countries which host large numbers of refugees should, in the spirit of burden sharing, receive adequate assistance to enable them to provide essential services to the refugees. Donors should also provide adequate assistance to least developed countries with large numbers of displaced persons and returnees resulting from man-made and natural disasters.

Chapter II

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES

60. The individual least developed countries have set their own objectives and priorities for their development and will bear the primary responsibility for implementation of their development plans and programmes, for review of progress and to strengthen planning and project preparation. In order to achieve the objectives of the Substantial New Programme of Action, the international community recognizes that action by the least developed countries at the national level must be complemented by measures of support, both through increased financial resource transfers and through policies and programmes affecting the modalities of assistance, technical assistance and transfer of technology, commercial policy measures and co-operation among developing countries. Although all least developed countries are dependent on outside assistance if they are to progress toward self-reliant development, each one has particular problems. International measures of support must be flexible and appropriate to the situation in each country. In addition, such measures should be seen as reinforcing, and not replacing, efforts at the national level to put in place an adequate policy framework and mobilize domestic resources. The Substantial New Programme of Action, enshrining this basic principle of complementary action at the domestic and the international level, constitutes, therefore, an explicit partnership for development between least developed countries and the international community.

A. TRANSFER OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

1. Financial assistance requirements and policies

61. The least developed countries themselves will adopt vigorous measures for mobilization of their domestic resources. However, in view of their very low income per capita, with the bulk of the population far below a minimum standard of nutrition, health, education and housing, and of the very high proportion of population in the subsistence sectors, it would be impossible for these countries to mobilize sufficient resources domestically for the purpose of implementing this Programme of Action. The detailed estimates of requirements by the least developed countries have been presented to and noted by the Conference, as well as macro-economic projections. Strong and immediate expansion of support for the least developed countries is crucial if they are to reverse the present trend of fast deteriorating socio-economic situations.

62. Therefore a substantial transfer of resources from the international community, particularly the developed countries, will be required in order to implement effectively the above Programme, especially its immediate action component, as described in paragraph 72 below. The least developed countries have presented, during the preparatory stages of the Conference, country programmes according to which their external financing requirements for the first half of the 1980s would be 85 per cent higher in real terms than those for the past five years (which averaged $6.6 billion at 1980 prices) and would represent an extra requirement of $5.7 billion on average per year, while in 1990 total concessional assistance flows should rise to $24 billion at 1980 prices.

63. The Conference recognizes that only a substantial increase in official development assistance in real terms during the present decade will enable the least developed countries to achieve the objectives of their country programmes within the framework of the Substantial New Programme of Action. As large a proportion as

possible of these increased transfers of resources should be disbursed urgently and effectively in order to meet immediate needs and to provide the necessary momentum to the development efforts of the least developed countries. In order to achieve this result, all donors have agreed to make a special effort to increase their contributions. In this regard, all donor countries reaffirm their commitment to the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for over-all official development assistance, as envisaged in the provisions of paragraph 24 of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. Within the framework of the general increase, the flows of official development assistance increasingly will be directed towards the least developed countries. Specifically, in this connection most donors of official development assistance will devote in the coming years 0.15 per cent of their gross national product to the least developed countries. Others will double their official development assistance to the least developed countries in the same period. Taken together, these efforts are likely to achieve, by 1985, a doubling of official development assistance to the least developed countries, compared to the transfers to them during the last five years.

64. The balance-of-payments position of the least developed countries is extremely precarious, and these countries are now only able to finance half their imports out of export earnings. Over the past decade, the import costs of the least developed countries have risen by $10 billion (from $3 billion in 1970 to $13 billion in 1980), with only a small increase in the real volume of such imports (and in actual decline in per capita terms). In view of this situation, all donors and others in a position to provide assistance will consider the establishment of facilities for providing such assistance, taking into account the special needs of the least developed countries.

2. Increased allocations to least developed countries in multilateral programmes

65. In view of the special difficulties of the least developed countries in obtaining access to non-concessional assistance, multilateral assistance agencies should direct to the least developed countries a substantial and increasing volume of concessional assistance. These agencies are requested to consider increasing the share of these countries in their programmes of concessional assistance.

66. To this end, the resources of the World Bank Group, particularly the International Development Association and of regional development banks, should be significantly increased, taking into account structural transformation needs, the rate of inflation and energy requirements; in particular, the Sixth Replenishment of the International Development Association, as already agreed, should be completed as rapidly as possible. Governments should thus channel a substantial part of their aid through existing multilateral agencies.

67. Due account should be taken of the needs of the least developed countries when considering the need for, as well as the objectives and modalities of, new multilateral assistance facilities.

3. New mechanisms for increased financial transfers to the least developed countries

68. It is recognized that the present level of official development assistance is insufficient to meet the growing requirements for external assistance of the least developed countries. Therefore, the discussions in the respective international forums regarding possible new mechanisms for mobilizing increased financial transfers

to developing countries should take into account the large needs of the least developed countries. In this connection, relevant competent international institutions should continue their concerted efforts to consider new mechanisms and arrangements, which include proposals for, inter alia, international tax schemes for development, further gold sales by the International Monetary Fund, the linking of the creation of special drawing rights to development assistance, and the use of interest-subsidy techniques.

69. In view of the fact that concessional resources constitute a major source of external financing for least developed countries, the Conference notes with interest that, in May 1981, the Joint Ministerial Committee of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries (Development Committee) decided, in principle, to establish a task force to carry forward and widen the continuing study of the problems affecting the volume and quality and effective use of concessional flows. The Conference welcomes the continuing study of concessional flows in the Development Committee.

4. Aid modalities

70. The successful implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s should be accompanied by improvements in aid practices and management of both least developed countries and their partners. To this end, donor countries and institutions should make their best efforts to reach decisions at the earliest opportunity concerning the following proposed measures to improve the quality and effectiveness of official development assistance:

(a) Provide, as a general rule, assistance to the least developed countries as grants; provide loans mutually agreed upon on highly concessional terms and fully implement Trade and Development Board resolution 165 (S-IX) expeditiously;

(b) Provide, to the maximum extent possible, official development assistance loans and grants to the least developed countries on an untied basis;

(c) Take into account in the planning, funding and implementation of individual projects and programmes the effects of inflation on project/programme costs;

(d) Take fully into account not only economic and financial factors but also longer-term socio-economic effects in the planning and appraisal of projects; donor agencies should accept that there is a higher degree of uncertainty in the case of the least developed countries;

(e) Provide assistance in the form of projects, as well as in other forms, such as commodity aid, programme and sectoral assistance, balance-of-payments support and budgetary support where appropriate, recurrent cost support and support for local development banks and financing institutions; sector and general import programmes would cover the urgent need to expand imports both for development and to help meet the minimum human needs;

(f) Increasingly utilize national development agencies in the recipient countries for implementation of programme and sector assistance;

(g) Give full consideration to providing assistance not only for productive investment and investment in social infrastructure (inter alia, education and health) to meet social requirements within the framework of suitable national development policies, but also for disaster relief;

(h) Taking into account the specific nature of the project or programme concerned, the over-all development objectives, and the economic and social conditions of the individual least developed country as well as its ability to mobilize the required resources internally, provide local cost financing and, where mutually agreed, provide all such costs;

(i) Recognize the special resource constraints of the least developed countries. To this effect, appropriate measures, including where possible payments of funds, should be taken in donor administrative procedures for financing local and foreign exchange costs of agreed projects to expedite disbursements for goods and services, thus minimizing the need for these countries to seek temporary financing pending reimbursement for expenditures already incurred;

(j) Develop a consistent framework for recurrent cost planning and take into account in the selection and design of projects their budgetary impact over the long term;

(k) Consider providing for the support of recurrent costs for specific projects or programmes of high development priority both in local currency and in foreign exchange for specified time periods, with arrangements for gradual takeover by the recipient country, thereby taking into account the particular difficulties of the country concerned in mobilizing its internal resources, and making special allowance for projects of a social non-revenue-generating nature;

(l) Give high priority to requests for assistance from the least developed countries in strengthening their administrative capacity through action in such areas as providing advice and training (including on-the-job local training and, where appropriate, third-country training) in development planning, project preparation, general management, budgeting, procurement and accounting;

(m) Take as long a view as possible of the assistance flows to particular least developed countries, so as to make it easier for aid measures to be integrated into the latter' planning and budgetary cycles.

71. Donors will - within the framework of the organizational measures as described in chapter III - ensure that the available international support will be utilized to the benefit of all least developed countries, according to their individual requirements.

B. IMMEDIATE ACTION COMPONENT OF THE SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION

72. In order to lay the ground for the effective implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action and to ensure that medium and longer-term development is not prejudiced, immediate attention should be given to the least developed countries' most urgent needs, including, inter alia, the following:

(a) Provision of substantial resources to give urgent and prompt relief to acute shortages of critical commodities, particularly food and energy;

(b) Immediate financial assistance in the form of debt relief and balance-of-payment support;

(c) Urgent and substantial emergency assistance measures in order to mitigate the effects of natural and man-made disasters, including those resulting in unforeseen shortfalls in resource mobilization;

(d) Provision of assistance for overcoming urgent bottlenecks in management, maintenance, repair and physical facilities in order to obtain better use of existing infrastructure and industrial plants;

(e) Immediate provision of additional financial support for the identification of projects, undertaking of feasibility studies and detailed preparation of investment projects as well as projects relating to social needs;

(f) Urgent and substantially enhanced supply of inputs necessary for agricultural and rural development, such as fertilizers and pumps, etc., in order to increase production and productivity, especially of foodstuffs and cash crops;

(g) Financial support for activities at community levels which create jobs, including support for local small-scale, labour-intensive rural public works projects, and for non-governmental organizations;

(h) Assurances on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis by the international community that adequate resources are provided on an assured and predictable basis to complement the activities of least developed countries themselves in these critical but vital components of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

C. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

73. The least developed countries will need an increasing number of experts (at least in the immediate future) in the fields of training and of project identification, preparation, implementation and evaluation. They will also need equipment as aid so as to fill the technological gap as a significant proportion of the total technical assistance package. The need for training will also persist throughout the decade. Therefore, the following steps should be taken by the donor institutions:

(a) Donor institutions should make special efforts to provide experts highly qualified for the specific tasks they are assigned in the least developed countries, to meet requests for such assistance speedily, and to meet the desire of the least developed countries to secure effective training of local personnel as part of the assignment of foreign experts. Recipient countries should ensure that such local personnel are made available for the project, in order to provide, inter alia, for an adequate continuation and follow-up of the project;

(b) Donor institutions should give urgent consideration to enabling or assisting the least developed countries to carry out pre-feasibility studies, as well as other aspects of projects preparation, utilizing to the extent possible experts and consultants of the least developed countries' own choice;

(c) To broaden the availability of expert staff, and where the recipient country so requests, full consideration should be given to the use of middle-level experts who can effectively perform many tasks in much closer contact with the people and the institutions involved in the programme or project, such as United Nations and national volunteers and volunteers from non-governmental organizations;

(d) The approach of technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) should be applied by donor institutions, where appropriate, to enable least developed countries to draw on relevant experience of other developing countries and among themselves. Donor agencies are urged to help finance TCDC activities and co-operate with governments in the use, where feasible, of institutions (national, subregional and regional) in developing countries for training, consultancy services, expertise, etc.;

(e) Donor agencies should provide and/or support the establishment of training capabilities in order to enable the least developed countries to develop their local capacities for carrying out feasibility studies and effective implementation of development projects.

D. OTHER INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY MEASURES

1. Commercial policy measures

74. The extremely low absolute levels of least developed countries' export receipts and the resulting sharp limitation in their capacity to import are major structural constraints on developing their trade. In the context of the need for further liberalization of world trade, special efforts must be made to promote adequate markets and to provide the greatest possible certainty and continued access.

Improved access to markets

75. The generalized system of preferences does not cover all items of export interest to the least developed countries. The least developed countries export only a few manufactured products and their total exports are relatively small or insignificant, reflecting not only a low level of their economic development but also the difficulties faced by the products of their countries in developed country markets. Often, weak and inadequate trade promotion and administrative structures in these countries, as well as difficulties in initiating and maintaining markets for export products, are partly responsible for the low level of their exports.

76. In the context of efforts to expand and diversify the exports of least developed countries, and bearing in mind the small volumes of trade involved, preferential schemes of various kinds should be further simplified and improved, with a view to providing the fullest possible duty-free treatment. Due attention should be given to extending the list of products, to the nature of the origin rules applied (individual and cumulative) and to country coverage. In this context mention should be made of:

- broad contractual frameworks (such as the Lomé Convention), where these are possible;

- schemes of generalized preferences. (In this connection least developed countries might be given special encouragement to make use of the consultative mechanism existing within the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, if they wish to raise particular problems.);

- efforts by developing countries to set up an internationally agreed system of preferences among developing countries and in this context to provide special treatment for least developed countries.

77. Action should be taken in the appropriate forums with a view to reducing any tariff and non-tariff protection, such as the effects of tariff escalation and of quantitative restrictions, which may hinder the least developed countries' exports of major processed goods and act as a disincentive to the vertical diversification of their economies.

78. Bearing in mind the need to sustain the framework of international rules and where possible to improve and make more secure access to markets, GATT should consider prolonging the life of the special Sub-Committee on Trade of Least Developed Countries of the Committee on Trade and Development, since it provides a most useful forum for

dialogue and could - along with other United Nations and international agencies - make a useful contribution to the review of the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. Given that the GATT Enabling Clause contains provisions designed to benefit the least developed countries in particular, allowance should be made for the special needs of these countries in accordance with the Codes agreed during the multilateral trade negotiations.

Other measures to promote exports

79. As stated in paragraph 143 of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, "To meet the special needs of the least developed countries, the international community will support efforts towards strengthening the technological and productive capacity of those countries ...". Whilst this support must be tailored to the needs of individual countries, consideration should be given to the following measures:

(a) Diversification of exports: Bilateral donors and international organizations should take appropriate steps to assist the least developed countries to create industries for on-the-spot processing of raw materials and food products, as one of the bases for diversification of exports;

(b) An integrated vertical approach to export expansion: Where feasible, integrated package projects for the development of exports, involving co-ordinated efforts ranging from planning through production in the least developed countries to sales in developed countries, should be developed. Adequate resources should be provided to overcome all of the bottlenecks related to expanding or promoting particular export products;

(c) Long-term sales arrangements: The possibilities for providing or promoting long-term arrangements for the sale of export products of least developed countries in the markets of importing countries should be further explored. Governments and international institutions should seek to purchase some of their supplies in least developed countries as a matter of deliberate policy;

(d) Regional co-operation and economic co-operation among developing countries: Every step should be taken to promote regional co-operation and effective economic co-operation among developing countries themselves;

(e) Trade support measures: The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT should have a strengthened role, along with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in promoting comprehensive strategies and in this context effective domestic and international marketing; developed countries should consider the establishment and encouragement of import opportunities offices;

(f) Technical assistance: Bilateral donors and international agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Common Fund for Commodities (Second Account) should help with the provision of training (largely on the spot), with research and with the mobilization of appropriate technology.

80. Assistance should be provided by donor countries and relevant international organizations to assist least developed countries in the implementation of measures listed in paragraph 57 above.

International co-operation in the field of commodities

81. It is important to recall that many least developed countries depend, and will continue to depend, on the export of commodities for their foreign exchange earnings. In the case of a few commodities scarcities underpin relatively high and stable prices but, in the case of the commodities of greatest importance to many, if not most, least developed countries prices fluctuate considerably. Taking into account the special needs of the least developed countries, continuing efforts should therefore be made to promote international co-operation in these fields.

82. Commodity agreements: Producers and consumers of commodities exported by least developed countries should make renewed efforts, within the framework of the Integrated Programme for Commodities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to conclude commodity agreements as rapidly as possible for suitable commodities and to implement the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities. Consideration should be given by the producers and consumers concerned, in the context of international commodity agreements, to the special needs of least developed countries, such as exemption from pre-financing of buffer stocks.

83. Compensation for export earnings shortfalls: Developed countries trading in primary commodities with least developed countries should study ways and means of helping the least developed countries to offset the damaging effects of loss of foreign exchange earnings arising from fluctuations in the latter's exports of primary commodities to them and should be invited to report on progress in good time for a comprehensive factual report on their findings to be submitted to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its sixth session. To this effect, all such trading countries should consider how and what arrangements might be made to compensate the least developed countries for shortfalls in their earnings from the export of primary commodities.

2. Transport and communications

84. Least developed countries face severe difficulties and suffer from bottlenecks in the transport sector, particularly in the carriage of their foreign trade. The economic and social development of the least developed countries is seriously hampered by the absence of an adequate infrastructure in the transport and communications sector. The improvement of the physical infrastructure is vital for the expansion of all productive sectors and essential social services, as well as for the efficient implementation of humanitarian and emergency relief measures. The strengthening of facilities for transport and communications is at the same time crucial for co-operation in a subregional and regional framework.

85. The expansion of transport capacity and infrastructure and the improvement of the total transport operation in line with the rate of growth of foreign trade require the availability of international financial resources, particularly for the development of ports, roads, rural tracks and railways in least developed countries, from United Nations organizations and bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as financial resources and technical assistance to train the required manpower and to set up indigenous training institutions.

86. Most of the least developed countries suffer from inadequate internal transport facilities in their region which indirectly hinder their development. Therefore, greater attention should be given by the international community to providing assistance in the establishment of the internal transport facilities to link remote areas.

87. Each least developed country should design a strategy for the sector which takes account of the specific circumstances of the country. For all these countries the extension and maintenance of their road networks needs priority. Railways also deserve special attention, since they provide a highly effective means of transport in the least developed countries.

88. For land-locked countries, improvement in transit-transport and port facilities in the transit countries are of great importance for easy access to world markets. Consideration should be given by donors and international agencies to the provision of concessional financial assistance for the investment schemes undertaken by the neighbouring transit countries, individually and/or jointly in association with the land-locked countries of the same region, to improve transit infrastructure facilities.

89. For coastal and island least developed countries the development of national shipping services and of river and lake services are equally important and should receive high priority.

90. Regional and subregional schemes also have an essential role to play, not least because they can help to keep capital and running costs to a minimum. Bilateral and multilateral donors should therefore join together to help meet costs in the context of well developed regional policies.

91. Congestion of ports causes a serious bottleneck for the international trade of least developed countries. Special attention should be given to the specific problems, both physical and administrative, which least developed countries experience with regard to transit traffic of goods through neighbouring countries.

92. The question of participation in shipping is an important one for the least developed countries. Many of these countries have the necessary shipboard labour and there is no reason why they should not participate in the benefits of shipping.

93. The development of merchant fleets is an important priority for certain least developed countries. This should be duly taken into account by financial institutions, which should consider the provision of the necessary funds on reasonable terms for this purpose. Where applicable, liner conferences should have regard to the provisions of the Convention on a Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences, taking into account, where appropriate, the concerns of the least developed countries. The Convention should be brought into force as soon as possible.

94. Least developed countries are urged to take into consideration the provisions of the relevant international conventions, including the recently concluded United Nations Convention on International Multimodal Transport of Goods, in their planning of transport schemes and acquisition of equipment in order to protect their trade and transport interests and insulate themselves against premature technological obsolescence in infrastructure and of equipment and rolling stock.

95. By giving greater priority to the communications sector attempts will be made to improve the technological components of existing hardware and expand and upgrade the communications system as a whole. least developed countries should devise more efficient and economically and socially desirable pricing policies for this sector. The developed countries should consider giving concessional assistance to the least developed countries to enable them to improve their communications system, including the use of satellites where appropriate.

96. Donors are requested to support and encourage the implementation of joint transport and communications projects between two or more least developed countries, particularly when such projects are envisaged in the framework of comprehensive subregional or regional programmes for the development of the transport and communications sector. The Transport and Communications Decade in Africa for the 1980s is a genuine example in this regard.

3. Food and agriculture

97. Food and agriculture is an area where there is an important role for international co-operation in support of domestic efforts. The least developed countries will be able to rely on the developed countries and the relevant international institutions to help them:

- to draw up national food strategies, such as those mentioned in paragraph 10 above;

- to take the steps laid down in that paragraph.

98. Increased technical and financial assistance should be provided to raise agricultural productivity and expand the production and improve the conservation of foodstuffs, particularly in the case of food crops. The least developed countries should be able to benefit more from and for rural investment supplied by the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

99. The international community should be mobilized to participate in the establishment of food security in the least developed countries. To this end, the following measures should be taken:

(a) financial and technical support for initiatives to be taken by the least developed countries to build up national and subregional stocks;

(b) early negotiation for the conclusion of a new international wheat agreement containing viable economic provisions;

(c) actual establishment of the International Emergency Food Reserve at the level of 500,000 tons per annum, particularly through the participation of new donors;

(d) other appropriate measures, designed to strengthen national food security and increase on a predictable basis investment in agriculture and rural development.

100. Food aid, which is a critical part of any national food strategy for some least developed countries, is likely to continue to be necessary in order to help meet food requirements which most of these countries are unable to satisfy by themselves. Adequate food aid in the form of emergency aid will have to be made available in order to help ensure the survival of populations threatened by famine. In accordance with the objective of self-sufficiency in food, food aid in the form of a contribution to the offsetting of structural deficits will have to continue to be temporary, so as not to exacerbate or perpetuate the dependence of deficit countries.

101. Countries not yet taking part in the international food aid effort - but which could do so - should make a significant countribution to attainment of the annual objective of 10 million tons of cereals as food aid to developing countries under the Food Aid Convention, 1980.

102. Food aid for least developed countries should be provided so far as possible in the form of grants or on highly concessional terms; donors should consider paying relevant transport costs.

4. Transfer and development of technology

103. The international community has recognized the fundamental role of technology in the socio-economic development of all countries and, in particular, in the acceleration of the development of the developing countries. It has also underlined the key role of technology in the progress of mankind and that all people should have the capacity to benefit from the advances and developments in technology in order to improve their standards of living. The economic and social cost associated with the acquisition and application of foreign technology in an imperfect market is very high. The situation of least developed countries is aggravated by the almost complete lack of domestic research and development capabilities. This is reflected in their technological dependence, particularly in sectors of critical importance to their socio-economic development: nutrition, health, housing, communications, energy.

104. In view of these considerations and in particular the special difficulties of the least developed countries in obtaining access to modern technology and in strengthening their technological capacities, every effort should be made by the international community to accelerate the technological transformation of least developed countries and particularly:

(a) Assist the least developed countries to establish and strengthen their institutional infrastructure, including technology centres, which could, inter alia:

(i) facilitate the co-ordinated formulation and implementation of technology plans, policies, laws and regulations;

(ii) evaluate, negotiate and register transfer of technology transactions;

(iii) act as a possible focal point between national and international technology suppliers and national technology users;

(iv) provide technical assistance, information and training to technology users;

(v) support or participate in programmes of research and development of technology in selected areas, with the aim of developing indigenous technologies, and promote the adaptation of imported technologies to national requirements;

(vi) facilitate the transfer of technology from small and medium-sized enterprises;

(b) Give least developed countries the freest and fullest possible access to technologies whose transfer is not subject to private decisions and facilitate access, to the extent practicable, to technologies whose transfer is subject to private decisions, in the light of the legal order of the respective country;

(c) Give special consideration to the problems faced by the least developed countries in the field of the reverse transfer of technology, including examination of ways to assist these countries in dealing with such problems. Possible arrangements for the least developed countries to benefit from the co-operative exchange of skills among developing countries should also be considered;

(d) Consider, as part of the process of accelerating the transfer of technology to the least developed countries, provision for an increase in the number of scholarships for studies and training in science and technology;

(e) Assist the least developed countries in the formulation of appropriate laws, regulations and policies relating to the import of technology and promotion of the development of indigenous technologies;

(f) Formulate appropriate policies dealing with specific sectors of critical importance to least developed countries: health, nutrition, housing, communication, energy.

5. Multicountry schemes

105. Co-operation among developing countries can play a key role in supporting the Substantial New Programme of Action for the least developed countries by providing them with major opportunities for development through growing links with other developing countries. The following elements of such efforts should be strongly supported within the framework of economic co-operation among developing countries:

(a) Particular attention to the special difficulties of the least developed countries in any global preferential arrangements among developing countries in the field of trade (tariff and non-tariff barriers);

(b) Within regional co-operation programmes among developing countries, arrangements for joint exploitation of common river-basin or other resource potentials, with special support for participating least developed countries;

(c) Within regional co-operation schemes among developing countries, particular attention to the least developed countries in the flow of concessional financial and technical assistance by the developing countries in a position to provide assistance.

106. Developed countries and international institutions should facilitate the flow of technical and financial assistance and assistance in kind from other developing countries to the least developed countries; they should also give especially strong support to regional co-operation arrangements which include significant benefits to least developed countries.

107. To the maximum extent possible, financial assistance to the least developed countries, from whatever the source, should at least partly be eligible to be used to purchase imports from countries within each least developed country's own region.

108. Where there are realistic opportunities for multicountry investments involving least developed countries and other countries in the same subregion, they should be strongly supported by donors. The financial requirements for their promotion in most cases go far beyond the capabilities of the developing countries involved, and particularly the least developed among them. Furthermore, such programmes may in fact present a unique opportunity for effectively transforming the economies of the least developed countries concerned, many of which are too small and have too limited a resource base to support any significant economic structural changes by investments only at the national level.

Chapter III

ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION, FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING

109. Given that one of the essential objectives of the Substantial New Programme of Action is to provide new orientation and impetus to development efforts of the least developed countries and to international co-operation in support of these efforts, it is important that it provide for sustained processes of co-operation and review at the national, regional and global levels.

A. National level

110. The Government of each least developed country should establish a focal point for continuing contact with its development partners, both bilateral and multilateral, concerning the review and implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. It may also be found useful to create an intragovernmental working party of relevant ministries, including the office responsible for the administration of foreign assistance and that responsible for planning, where this has not yet been done, so as to assist the focal point in co-ordinating the work at the national level.

111. As a mechanism for regular and periodic review and implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action, governments of the least developed countries, after consultations as appropriate with relevant United Nations and intergovernmental agencies and donor countries, may establish aid consultative groups or other arrangements where they do not already exist. It should be open to the least developed countries which are not covered by existing arrangements to invite actual and potential donors and trade partners; United Nations organs, organizations and bodies; international and intergovernmental organizations; and neighbouring countries as appropriate to join in establishing suitable new consultative arrangements. Where arrangements already exist (such as World Bank Consultative Groups, United Nations Development Programme Round Tables and the Club of Sahel) consideration should be given to strengthening and broadening them in order to review the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action in specific least developed countries.

112. In view of the responsibility of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the global review, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD should be invited, as necessary, to be represented at the review meetings at the country level for mutual information purposes.

113. These reviews should take place at appropriate intervals at the initiative of the interested least developed country, which may seek assistance from the lead agency for its aid group in organizing them. These reviews should be devoted to the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action at the country level and will, in particular, concentrate on:

(a) a review of the country's economic and financial situation, and of external assistance;

(b) an assessment of progress in the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action in the least developed country concerned and consideration of a detailed annual or mid-term plan elaborating the economic and financial strategies, priorities and objectives and the requirements of external resources to support the implementation of these plans and programmes;

(c) securing assistance for the implementation of plans and programmes for the period under consideration;

(d) a review of the aid conditions, terms and modalities, including technical assistance, in the light of the guidelines contained in the Programme, in order to see what further steps, if any, may be needed to ensure their more effective application;

(e) consideration of ways and means of assisting the least developed countries to expand their trade in existing and in new markets.

114. The first round of such country reviews should take place as soon as possible and preferably by 1983.

115. For each review meeting a report should be prepared by the Government of the least developed country concerned providing an assessment of the current economic situation and the immediate and long-term requirements for assistance in the light of its own priorities and programmes. In the preparation of this report the Government concerned may request assistance from the relevant organizations of the United Nations system.

116. Some least developed countries, in consultation with their development partners, may find it convenient to synchronize their meetings in time and venue. In such cases, the least developed countries and lead agencies concerned may call for assistance on the relevant regional commissions or intergovernmental organizations of a regional character, who are urged to provide the required assistance.

B. Regional and global levels

117. The continuing interaction between specific implementation activity focused at the country and regional level and the global monitoring of progress will be crucial to the success of the Substantial New Programme of Action. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should play the focal role in elaborating the detailed arrangements at the global level for implementation, co-ordination and monitoring of the Programme.

118. A mid-term global review of progress towards the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action should be undertaken in 1985. It will also readjust as appropriate the Programme of Action for the second half of the decade in order to ensure its full implementation.

119. The Conference recommends to the General Assembly that it decide that the Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should meet at high level in order to carry out the mid-term review and consider the possibility of holding a global review at the end of the decade, which might, inter alia, take the form of a United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The results of the mid-term review should be made available to the General Assembly, so that they would be taken fully into account in the process of review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy. In discharging its responsibility, the Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries will consider the reports from aid consultative group meetings, contributions from all relevant agencies referred to it in paragraph 122 below and analyses of issues from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as referred to in paragraph 121 below.

120. The global monitoring arrangements will review progress made in the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action by the least developed countries and their development partners, and in particular:

(a) review progress at the country level thus far in the decade;

(b) review progress in international support measures, and particularly in official development assistance;

(c) consider measures, as necessary, for ensuring the full implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action over the decade.

121. As a basis for global monitoring arrangements, the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in collaboration with the organizations of the United Nations system, should prepare up-to-date information on the situation in the least developed countries as a whole and, drawing upon the analyses referred to in paragraph 122 below as well as on the results of the review meetings at the national level, should prepare analyses of the progress in and of policy issues affecting the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. In this context the basic data series prepared by the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development concerning all important socio-economic indicators for the least developed countries should be maintained.

122. Other competent organizations (such as the United Nations Development Programme, including the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the Special Measures Fund for the Least Developed Countries), the relevant United Nations regional commissions, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies (such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund), GATT, regional development banks and regional organizations of developing countries, should be encouraged to give full attention in their economic analyses and monitoring to the problems, needs and achievements of the least developed countries and produce relevant statistics. Within and subject to its existing structure and procedures, each such body should prepare periodic reports on the activities falling within its competence as inputs into the global review process.

123. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, in close collaboration with the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, the Executive Secretaries

of the regional commissions and the lead agencies for the aid groups, should ensure at the secretariat level the full mobilization and co-ordination of all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system for the purpose of implementation and follow-up of the Substantial New Programme of Action. The system of focal points in each United Nations agency, used in the preparations for the present Conference, should be kept active also for the implementation tasks over the decade.

124. The resident co-ordinator for the United Nations system should continue mobilizing all parts of the United Nations system within the particular country in support of the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action over the decade.

125. The relevant United Nations regional commissions shall, as appropriate, contribute to the follow-up process and offer an opportunity for the least developed countries of their respective regions to exchange experience and seek solutions to common problems at the national, regional and global levels. The regional commissions should be suitably restructured to discharge effectively their responsibilities in respect of the follow-up and monitoring of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

126. The effective follow-up, monitoring and implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action will require a range of services at the Secretariat level. Taking into account the focal role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the United Nations system on the least developed countries as referred to in resolution 122 (V) of that Conference and specified in this Substantial New Programme of Action, the Secretary-General of the United Nations is requested to make recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session on the most effective and efficient arrangements for carrying out the services required.

127. To provide the extra resources needed by governments for more intensive planning efforts, feasibility studies and project preparation over the first half of the decade of the 1980s in the least developed countries, adequate special allocation should be made by donors to the already existing Special Measures Fund for the Least Developed Countries of the United Nations Development Programme or through other suitable channels for the least developed countries.

128. To maintain the momentum of commitments made by the international community and the obligations undertaken by the least developed countries for the decade with a view to achieving accelerated growth rates and structural transformation, it is essential that the progress in the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action is reviewed and monitored regularly at the national and regional, as well as the global, level. The national reviews will be fundamental for the execution of the Programme in the least developed countries, while the regional and global reviews will be crucial in ensuring international support to it. This review mechanism will provide for effective monitoring of the over-all performance of the least developed countries, on the one hand, and of the provision of development assistance to the least developed countries, on the other hand. This will be a means to ensure that every least developed country receives an adequate minimum flow of assistance and demonstrates a minimum standard of performance in economic development.

B. Statements made upon the adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action

1. The spokesman for the Group of 77 said that the Paris Conference had been a positive and encouraging sign, though not a decisive one, for the resumption of the North-South dialogue. The results obtained were basically expressions of recognition of the serious situation the least developed countries were currently experiencing and the urgent need to find solutions for them. Nevertheless, there were still difficulties in overcoming economic constraints so as to be able to channel a greater flow of the aid needed in order to tackle that challenge.

2. The problems of the donor countries had direct and negative repercussions on the least developed countries, and the problems of the latter and of the third world in general themselves influenced the economy of the developed countries. That was a veritable Gordian knot which must somehow rapidly be cut. It represented a fiendish vicious circle from which the international community must find an escape before all its members were utterly weakened, or only a few of them survived.

3. The Group of 77 hoped that the Conference had contributed to that purpose. Its members had displayed once again their acknowledged and already demonstrated capacity for dialogue and flexibility. They had made all necessary efforts for this Conference to succeed in drawing up the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, but there was still a long way to go for their expectations to be satisfied.

4. His Group believed that every day more people were sharing in the dialogue and that the light at the end of the tunnel was becoming apparent. It was to be hoped that the milestone represented by the Conference might augur a promising future that would redound to the advantage not only of the least developed countries but also of a higher ethical principle, the solidarity of mankind, and therefore of all men, peoples and Governments of the earth. This must be the real objective of the future meetings, discussions and aspirations.

5. The representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, speaking on behalf of the African Group, expressed deep appreciation of the way in which the current Conference had brought to the attention of the international community the plight of the 31 least developed countries.

6. To some observers the SNPA which had just been adopted might be neither substantial nor new and that might very well be correct. However, the SNPA was a progressive and historic step in the sense that the problems and desperate needs of the least developed countries had for once been brought into a sharper focus. Furthermore, there was also the overriding political commitment by all the participants in the Conference that something urgent and substantial needed to be done by the international community to alleviate the suffering, deprivation and misery in the least developed countries. The pledge to double assistance to the least developed countries by 1985 must be seen in that light.

7. His Group would of course have wanted a stronger and more unequivocal commitment by the international community on the specific question of the flow of resources to the least developed countries in real terms and within a specific time frame, as the Group of 77 had proposed. However, in the spirit of compromise it had accepted the text in full cognizance that it was just the beginning. As long as most of the least developed countries continued to be caught in a system in which they were progressively selling cheap and buying dear, the struggle for international measures to redress that imbalance had to be a continuing process. While the SNPA did not go

as far as his Group would have wanted, the Conference on the whole had not been a failure but a qualified success. The African Group had particularly taken note of the fact that a number of developed countries had taken substantial and positive steps to increase the flow of aid to the least developed countries. This underscored the importance for all developed countries which had not yet done so to make positive and serious efforts and urgently to tackle the critical and desperate problems of the least developed countries which, as the Conference had unequivocally recognized, were being aggravated day after day.

8. He expressed his Group's deepest and very sincere appreciation to the Government of France for having hosted the Conference, as well as for providing an excellent social and physical environment under which it had been possible to work out the SNPA. He earnestly hoped that each participant in the Conference would do its utmost in the important follow-up action which would be required.

9. The African Group for its part would do its best to ensure the Programme's speedy and full implementation.

10. The representative of Bangladesh observed that it was a tribute to the wisdom, perseverance and accommodating attitudes of delegations that the Conference had been able to adopt the SNPA, which was a programme of action within the context of global development. The Programme had been conceived and developed within the International Development Strategy and targets had been laid down for the least developed countries and for the international community - the donor countries and international agencies in particular - to try to achieve.

11. The adoption of the SNPA was a matter for pride on the part of the international community which had evolved a guide to development over the next few years together with a modality for review at the country level, the possibility of a mid-term review and an end-decade review. The International Development Strategy had not been sacrificed, even though many of its goals and objectives had not been enshrined in the SNPA. He particularly referred to the targets laid down in paragraphs 24, 101 and 146 of the Strategy. Without giving up these goals the Conference had attempted to see how actual commitments and agreements could be reached on targets and on matters of action by the least developed countries as well as by the international community.

12. He was hopeful that the mid-term review would indicate that progress was being made with targets being achieved within prescribed time limits and that resources were flowing in terms of the actual needs and of real resources - not money - that were entailed by the development programmes of individual countries. The Conference had also tried to specify the various aid modalities which the international community was to follow in order to ensure that the Programme became successful. The Programme could be seen as a milestone in international development co-operation even though sacrifices had to be made. He paid tribute to all who had striven so hard to accommodate positions and find agreed solutions to problems during the Conference. He paid a special tribute to the President for his unrelenting efforts to ensure the success of the Conference and hoped that the President would be able personally to present the Substantial New Programme of Action to the General Assembly in New York.

13. The spokesman for the European Economic Community and its member States expressed deep satisfaction at the results of the Paris Conference. The Community warmly welcomed the SNPA and would co-operate fully with the least developed countries in its implementation.

14. Following the Conference, and as agreed in the International Development Strategy, serious consideration would be given by donor countries to increase substantially and in real terms official development assistance for the least developed countries during the decade. To that end, and in the context of their individual efforts to reach, and where possible surpass, the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP, member States of the Community which gave aid would aim to allocate 0.15 per cent of their GNP as ODA to the least developed countries; some had already surpassed this target.

15. In his statement in plenary on 2 September 1981, the spokesman for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities had undertaken to consider seriously any recommendation made by the Conference to developed countries as a whole to stabilize the earnings of least developed countries from exports of primary products. The Conference had made such a recommendation and the Community were accordingly prepared to examine in a constructive spirit the most appropriate means of meeting it, particularly by studying what arrangements could be made and how to extend to least developed countries not party to the Lomé II Convention, dispositions similar or equivalent to those of the Community's Stabex scheme. The Community earnestly exhorted all other countries trading in primary commodities with least developed countries to consider taking steps to similar effect.

16. In the context of the expansion of least developed countries' production and exports, the Community was prepared to examine with its partners any problem that might arise and would be examining further improvements to its scheme of generalized preferences.

17. As it was a vital problem for the least developed countries, food had its rightful place in the SNPA. The Community and its member States had made a decisive contribution to drafting that part of the Programme, and would spare no effort to join with others in promoting rural development and food security in the least developed countries. He expressed satisfaction that the Conference had also recognized the importance of the energy problem and had recommended measures to cope with that crucial issue.

18. One of the most important achievements of the Conference was the very clear dispositions which it had made for its follow-up, covering the role which the least developed countries and their bilateral and multilateral partners would be called on to play.

19. He also noted with satisfaction the important role which had been played by the non-governmental organizations in assisting the development of the least developed countries, and the part which they would continue to play in the coming decade in implementing the Substantial New Programme of Action.

20. Finally, the Community was proud that this important Conference had been held in the capital of one of its member States and he expressed appreciation to the French Government for its excellent arrangements and generous hospitality.

21. The representative of New Zealand said that as a South Pacific country, New Zealand had accepted a special long-term commitment to assist some of the most vulnerable island economies in the world. It was in this South Pacific region that it would continue to concentrate on development assistance and to make a special effort to increase it. His country did so in the belief that the most effective use could be made of available resources through geographical acceptance of responsibility among donors. It was his Government's belief too, that without current levels of assistance to the island developing countries many would, in fact, become least developed countries on present criteria. For these reasons it was not in a position to accept the financial sub-targets as expressed in the Programme of Action. However, in assisting the countries in the South Pacific his Government would pay special regard to the Programme of Action, much of which was directly relevant to the needs and precarious existence of island developing countries.

22. The representative of Japan expressed his delegation's gratification at the success of the Conference. His Government had been attaching great importance to the Conference and was pleased to see the Substantial New Programme of Action adopted by consensus.

23. In view of the importance and the urgent needs of assistance to the least developed countries, his delegation had submitted a proposal on financial assistance policies and requirements and was glad to see that due consideration had been given to the proposal, which had been included in the final formulation of chapter II of the Programme of Action.

24. His delegation strongly hoped that all donors would make their best efforts to ensure that the aggregate official development assistance disbursed to the least developed countries during the first half of the 1980s would be more than double that disbursed during the second half of the 1970s.

25. He reiterated that the Japanese Government would make every effort to increase positively its assistance to the least developed countries within the context of its new medium-term target for ODA. With regard to compensation for export earnings shortfalls, his delegation considered that studies should be continued in the relevant international organizations which had already taken up this subject.

26. The representative of Australia said that his Government welcomed the agreement reached at the Conference. The Australian Government intended to maintain the flow of its development resources within the context of its regional priorities and its concern to direct its development assistance to those it believed to have the greatest need. This had already resulted in more than a doubling of Australia's assistance to least developed countries over the period 1978-1981.

27. The representative of the United States of America said that his Government was pleased to join in the consensus on the Substantial New Programme of Action which provided a solid basis for action by all Governments.

28. The Programme was especially strong for its full recognition of the complex interrelationships in the development process. The complementarity among domestic and international measures was well reflected and had been a hallmark of the discussions. This reflexion of reality strengthened the international community's resolution to achieve accelerated growth for the least developed of its members in the decade ahead.

29. The United States pledged to work with the least developed countries towards the achievement of their development objectives. It believed that the commitment that had been jointly accepted to make a special effort to increase contributions and to direct them increasingly towards the least developed countries implicitly recognized that due account must be taken of national circumstances and that donor countries and institutions would employ a variety of criteria in allocating assistance funds. The well known position of the United States of not accepting specific targets for ODA related to GNP had not changed.

30. His delegation believed the existing international financial institutions were fully able to manage any increased resource transfers and did already take the needs of least developed countries into account. Should any new arrangements be considered, it expected that appropriate attention would continue to be given to the special needs of these countries.

31. With respect to possible new mechanisms, he noted that IMF had already considered and, as appropriate, would continue to review most of these proposals. The United States continued to oppose a link between special drawing rights and aid and remained concerned that any such link could damage efforts to make special drawing rights the principal reserve asset in the international monetary system. The United States was also not in a position to support the concept of international taxation.

32. The United States concurred fully that maintaining and improving market access for the least developed countries would play an increasingly important role as these countries developed their productive capacity. It supported the kind of measures set forth in the Programme to help the least developed countries develop efficient export industries and measures to improve their marketing ability. It accepted that producers and consumers of commodities exported by developing countries should give consideration to the feasibility of commodity agreements as a possible solution to problems in commodity markets. In this context, consideration should be given by the producers and consumers concerned to the special needs of the least developed countries.

33. The United States considered that IMF was the appropriate and best qualified forum for dealing with financial difficulties caused by export earnings shortfalls. In fact, the IMF Compensatory Financing Facility had been a very useful mechanism for providing assistance of this type. The discussion at the Conference had suggested possible new programmes for the least developed countries analgous to Stabex. The United States for its part did not consider that this would be either feasible for it or a significant way to assist the least developed countries. On the other hand, if other countries felt that they could provide useful assistance to the least developed countries in this manner, it would view their action with sympathy.

34. The United States interpreted the reference to the conclusion of an International Wheat Agreement to mean that in striving to achieve this objective the international community would explore alternative approaches to the currently tabled one which, for well known reasons, the United States could not accept.

35. Wording in the SNPA should not be construed to imply that the United States would consider paying transport costs for food aid being provided on other than a grant basis.

36. In the context of the section on transport measures, his Government was studying possible ratification of the Convention on a Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences and the United Nations Convention on International Multimodal Transport of Goods. It did not interpret the language in the Programme of Action as committing the United States to supporting them at this time.

37. The record of the United States revealed increasing attention to the problems of development in the least developed countries. It would continue this effort. His delegation left the Conference with renewed dedication to accelerated growth and a better life for the people of the least developed countries.

38. The representative of Finland reaffirmed the commitment of his Government to the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP as envisaged in the International Development Strategy. His Government had only a few days earlier decided to propose to Parliament a budget bill for fiscal year 1982 which would bring its ODA to 0.32 per cent, which was its intermediate target. Finnish ODA would thus continue to increase substantially and steadily over the coming years. In addition, his Government had unilaterally committed itself to a continuation of its policy of channelling at least 30 per cent of its ODA to those countries and this in turn would result in a doubling of its ODA to the least developed countries. Taking these commitments as the point of departure, Finnish ODA to the least developed countries would reach the 0.15 per cent level of GNP in the coming years.

39. The representative of Canada observed that the Conference had confirmed, in no uncertain terms, the renewed undertaking of the international community to the least developed countries for assistance. The results of the Conference reconfirmed the importance of the role that could be played by the United Nations in achieving the global goals of stability, social justice and prosperity by bringing together international representatives to create an arena for discussion and action. Realistic and constructive progress had been realized.

40. The process of developing and adopting the Substantial New Programme of Action had affirmed the mutuality of interest that existed between developed and developing, industrialized and industrializing countries. It further affirmed the interdependence of the global community and the importance of concentrated efforts to achieve mutual benefits.

41. Many delegations had had to make compromises in order to arrive at a common text and understanding for the Programme of Action. For example, Canada would have preferred to refer to the balance-of-payments approach to export earnings compensation as practised by IMF. However, his Government felt that a very positive result had been achieved. There had been co-operation on many issues and a successful Conference had been concluded. Canada supported the conclusions of the Conference and witnessed the adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action with great satisfaction. Canada is confident that the Programme, which represented an important undertaking by developed and developing countries, would help to bring about a sustained and self-reliant pattern of growth in the least developed countries. Canada pledged that it would work assidously with all to achieve the realistic objectives set out in the SNPA. It felt that this was an important step in the North-South dialogue and would contribute to a positive outcome at the forthcoming Cancun Summit.

42. The representative of Saudi Arabia said that, although his country was a developing country that relied on a dwindling resource, it had contributed to the development of developing countries, including the least developed among them, a move that was consistent with its principle of solidarity with developing countries in general and with its desire to foster international co-operation. It had given huge financial aid in the form of grants and highly concessional loans to 60 developing countries, including 22 least developed countries. The annual average of such aids had now reached $4 billion, including $1.5 billion in the form of grants. This financial aid represented 6 per cent of the gross national product, 41 per cent of the total assistance given by the OPEC countries, and 15 per cent of the total assistance given by the OECD countries.

43. Although Saudi Arabia was pleased to join the consensus on the adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, it would like, nevertheless, to state that it interpreted the reference in chapter II, section E, paragraph 70 of the SNPA as being to developed countries with renewable resources.

44. The representative of Bulgaria, speaking also on behalf of the Byelorussian SSR, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR, said that, acknowledging the great importance of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and of the documents which it had adopted, the delegations on whose behalf he spoke confirmed their deep sympathy for, and understanding of, the efforts of the least developed countries finally to free themselves from the yoke of colonialism and neo-colonialism, to overcome economic backwardness, poverty, hunger and disease and to embark on a course of independent development. In view of those noble goals, socialist countries had made every effort to contribute in an appropriately constructive manner to the work of the current Conference too.

45. Their positions of principle on the fundamental problems of the developing countries, including the least developed countries, were well known. They had been set forth in detail in United Nations organs, especially during the eleventh special session and the thirty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly, particularly with regard to the "global negotiations" on economic issues, and during the fourth and fifth sessions of UNCTAD (documents TD/211 and TD/264 respectively). Those positions had been developed and consolidated at the current Conference in the statements of their delegations both in the general debate and in the meetings of the various organs of the Conference. In addition, document A/CONF.104/17 showed the major results and future trends of co-operation between the USSR and the least developed countries.

46. Exploitation and inequality were unknown in the economic ties of the socialist countries on whose behalf he was speaking with any of the developing countries, including the least developed among them. The development of those ties constituted a new system of international economic relations differing in principle from the relations that existed between developing countries and the industrially developed capitalist nations.

47. From another point of view, the Conference had shown yet again, in clear and convincing fashion, that the causes of the particularly difficult economic situation of the least developed countries were the colonial domination under which the majority of them had lived in the recent past and the policy of neo-colonialism that was currently being pursued by imperialist States in fields including that of international economic relations.

48. In that connection, and by way of extension of their well-known position, the delegations of the socialist countries on whose behalf he was speaking viewed the recommendations elaborated by the Conference on matters relating to the granting of financial and other assistance to the least developed countries, including assistance within fixed parameters and according to fixed modalities, as being directed towards the industrially developed States of the capitalist system.

49. The need to solve the least developed countries' economic and social development problems was urgent. The fundamental prerequisites for the resolution of those and other global issues were the strengthening of peace, the maintenance and consolidation of international détente, the halting of the arms race and disarmament.

50. The socialist States on whose behalf he was speaking fully shared the justified concern expressed at the Conference with regard to the current deterioration of the international situation as a result of the attempts of certain imperialist circles to impose their will on other States, including least developed and other developing countries that were striving for genuine independence and autonomous development.

51. They also fully subscribed to the appeals that had been heard at the Conference for the cessation of the arms race and the diversion to peaceful purposes, including assistance to the least developed and other developing countries, of the enormous resources being devoted to armaments.

52. Giving voice thereby to the vital interests of the peoples of all countries, the Soviet Union, together with other socialist States, had proposed as long ago as 1973 the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council and the utilization of part of the funds thus saved for the economic development of developing countries. In 1978, the Soviet Union had suggested measures to facilitate the settlement of that matter, namely, that States with substantial

economic and military potential, including the States permanent members of the Security Council, should agree on the specific extent to which each of them would reduce its military budget, not in percentage terms, but in absolute terms, as well as on the concrete sums which each of them would earmark for the purposes of increasing assistance to the developing countries and establishing within the framework of the United Nations machinery for the distribution of those sums among the beneficiary countries. The implementation of those proposals would have represented a major contribution to the realization of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries.

53. Socialist countries would unwaveringly continue still further to develop comprehensive co-operation with interested least developed countries by providing economic and technical assistance for their efforts to overcome backwardness, raise the level of living of the broad masses of their populations and build independent national economies. Such co-operation would continue to be based on long-term agreements that took into account the parties' capabilities and the main lines of the least developed countries' current and long-term development plans and programmes.

54. The socialist States on whose behalf he was speaking declared their determination to make a significant contribution to the realization of those targets and measures in the SNPA which corresponded to the basic principles and methods characteristic of the socialist social system and of their system of economic relations with developing countries.

55. The comments and views he had expressed concerning the newly-adopted SNPA represented an integral part of the position on that Programme of the socialist countries on whose behalf he had spoken.

56. The representative of China observed that the adoption by consensus of the SNPA as a result of full negotiations by all parties in a spirit of seeking common ground while reserving differences was a positive result which had created a favourable atmosphere for the North-South dialogue.

57. China was a developing socialist country and the aid it provided to the friendly countries of the third world was a kind of mutual help between poor friends. Whether in terms of economic and technical standards or in terms of living standards of the people or, especially, in terms of capacity to provide aid to other countries, China could not be placed in the same category as the developed countries or with those developed or donor countries mentioned in chapter II, paragraph 63, of the SNPA.

58. At present, China was undergoing economic readjustment. The serious natural disasters in recent years had added to its difficulties. However, the Chinese people, determined to advance along the lines of self-reliance, were carrying out the task of modernizing China in a spirit of plain living and hard struggle. As in the past, the Chinese people would live frugally in order to continue their economic and technical assistance within their capacity to friendly third world countries, including the least developed ones. As its national economic strength grew, China would strive to contribute to the socio-economic development of the least developed countries and hence to the establishment of a new international economic order.

59. The implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference would require serious and earnest efforts. China believed that so long as third world countries upheld by the principle of solidarity and mutual assistance, so long as all justice-upholding countries worked together to remove obstacles, and so long as the international community, in particular all the developed countries, genuinely took up their due responsibilities, the reasonable provisions of the SNPA would gradually be realized.

60. A certain representative had mentioned the international conditions needed to implement the SNPA. The Chinese delegation wished to point out that the hegemonists were engaging in expansion and aggression all over the world, thus creating much turbulence. That was the harsh reality of today. The hegemonists paid only lip service to "peace", "détente" and "disarmament", but that could in no way conceal their true intentions of over-all arms-build-up and global expansion. In order to safeguard world peace and achieve a stable international environment for economic development, all justice-upholding countries must unite and launch an unrelenting struggle against the hegemonists.

61. The representative of the Holy See said that his delegation was very pleased that consensus had been reached on a text that represented a realistic recognition of the problems that had been debated and an honest commitment to respond to them. The SNPA, the result of compromise with all which that implied, spelled out the problems and indicated ways to improve the plight of the least developed countries, which should be guided by the ethical criterion of fraternal solidarity.

62. In urging that as full and generous a programme as possible be undertaken for each of these 31 countries, the delegation of the Holy See wished to reiterate the desire of the Catholic Church to be of assistance in whatever way it could and the availability of the Church, and its related organizations at the national and international level, to co-operate and to contribute to the just efforts that would result from the Conference.

63. The representative of Norway expressed satisfaction that it had proved possible for the Conference to adopt the SNPA by consensus. In negotiations on such vital and far-reaching issues as had been on the agenda for this Conference, nobody could have expected all their aspirations to be satisfied. The only way to avoid confrontation was to seek the common denominator. This was the only realistic and fruitful approach, particularly in North-South issues.

64. The result achieved was firm due to the positive spirit of co-operation and compromise that had prevailed throughout the negotiations. His delegation had hoped that the objectives and measures for national and international action incorporated in the Action Programme would have been of a scale and magnitude above that which had now materialized. It particularly regretted that certain concepts of the International Development Strategy were not included in the New Programme of Action. However, he attached overriding importance to the fact that the Programme of Action, although not fully satisfactory to everyone, was acceptable to a vast majority of countries. The task now before the international community was to ensure that effective implementation of the Programme was achieved at the country as well as the global level. The Norwegian Government would take an active part in that task in keeping with Norway's long tradition of recognizing the special situation and needs of the least developed countries.

65. Mr. Gamani Corea, Secretary-General of the Conference and Secretary-General of UNCTAD, expressed his great satisfaction that the Conference had been able to adopt the Substantial New Programme of Action, which provided the international community with a point of departure from which it could proceed to new co-operative relationships with the poorest and weakest of its members. He believed that the least developed countries would benefit from the concentrated attention given to their needs and problems at the Conference, and emphasized the particular importance he attached to the arrangements for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

PART TWO: PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

VII. General debate 13/ (Agenda item 8)

1. In the course of the general debate, held from 3 to 10 September 1981, the Conference heard statements by four Heads of State, by the heads of delegation of 106 States, by observers for bodies participating in the Conference pursuant to section II, paragraphs 4 (b) and 4 (c) of General Assembly resolution 35/205 and by representatives of the specialized agencies and other United Nations organs participating pursuant to the same resolution. Statements were also made by the Director-General for International Economic Co-operation and Development and other senior officials of the United Nations and by the executive heads or representatives of the regional commissions. Observers for intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations participating in the Conference pursuant to section II, paragraph 4 (f) and 4 (g) of the same General Assembly resolution also made statements. 14/

2. The general debate was opened by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, Mr. K.K.S. Dadzie, who said that the sustained development of least developed countries required a profound transformation of their economies calling for massive investment over a considerable period. There was a strong awareness among them of the need for the full mobilization of domestic resources, but the bulk of their needs had necessarily to be met externally through aid and trade. It was necessary to build a working consensus on the sharing of such responsibilities among developed countries, taking into account their relative capacities and specific characteristics, and concentrating on what needed to be done for the least developed countries rather than on who owed what to whom. The least developed countries were not insulated from the international economy, nor could their problems be tackled in total isolation from the wider issues of development. Any action which sought to remove structural imbalances and inequities in international economic relationships would clearly assist the least developed countries. Special measures for the least developed countries should be supplementary to, and part of, an over-all programme for the developing world, and their adoption should not detract from the importance of negotiations on other development problems. But that did not mean that such special measures should await an advance on broader issues. The urgency of the problems of the least developed world brooked no delay. Failure to move forward would augur badly for the future of the development dialogue in general. The challenge to the Conference was not simply to arrive at a consensus document but to move to practical action of direct relevance to some 300 million people.

3. The United Nations system would have a continuing role in implementing the Conference decisions. At the national and regional levels, this would involve contributing to national efforts; developing technical co-operation and promoting programme co-ordination; and helping to improve the capacity of countries to undertake development planning. At the country level, arrangements for review and follow up had to reflect specific national requirements and build on, and supplement, existing arrangements. At the global level, United Nations organizations could

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13/ Sections I-VI and VIII-X are contained in A/CONF.104/22/Add.1.

14/ For a list of the speakers in the general debate, see annex III below.

provide support for the review and appraisal exercise, which was a governmental responsibility. However, the success of the efforts of the organizations of the United Nations system was critically dependent on initiatives and follow up by governments themselves within the governing bodies of those organizations. It also depended on the political commitment of the international community to channel additional resources through the United Nations system.

4. All speakers in the general debate congratulated the President of the Conference on his election by acclamation. They expressed gratitude to the host country for the facilities it had placed at the disposal of the Conference and for its hospitality. They also expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD for the painstaking preparations for the Conference involving all the agencies of the United Nations system.

5. There were unanimous expressions of concern with, and sympathy for, the plight of the least developed countries, which had been characterized during the past decade by stagnation and even declines in per capita incomes in some of them. Emphasis was placed by all delegations on the magnitude of the challenge facing these countries in attempting to reverse the past unacceptable trends in economic growth and development, particularly in the context of the current unfavourable international economic environment.

6. All delegations agreed on the timeliness of the Conference and viewed it as an integral part of the necessary dialogue between the developing countries as a whole and the developed countries. They also proclaimed their commitment to contribute effectively to the work of the Conference and thereby the fulfilment of its mandate of finalizing, adopting and supporting the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries. They recognized the importance attached to the Conference by the least developed countries, as reflected in the extensive planning efforts that they had carried out at the country level as part of the preparatory process for the Conference and in the unprecedentedly high level of their representation at the Conference.

7. The Conference was seen by all participants as an opportunity for partners in development to get a better understanding of the special situation of and problems faced by the least developed countries. While those problems were not unique to the least developed countries, they were particularly intractable in these countries because of their structural handicaps. There was therefore full agreement that the least developed countries should be accorded favourable treatment by the international community, adapted in each case to their specific needs and circumstances.

8. There was unanimous recognition that the least developed countries themselves bore the main responsibility for the pace and nature of their development. However, it was likewise recognized that even the best possible mobilization and utilization of their domestic resources would not be sufficient to allow them to achieve the level and type of investment needed to accelerate greatly their growth and development. External support for their development efforts was therefore viewed as an essential complement to domestic measures and policies. Indeed, international support measures would have to pay due regard to the specific requirements and policy objectives of each country.

9. There was also unanimous recognition of the steps that the least developed countries were taking, or planned to introduce, to improve their economic performance during the decade of the 1980s. It was recognized that external assistance was particularly necessary to help relieve the severe external constraints on their development, arising in part from their heavy dependence on very few primary commodities, generally with unfavourable export prospects and providing them with fluctuating and inadequate financial resources. Hence the dependence of these countries on external assistance during the decade would have to be increased appreciably if they were to achieve their development objectives.

10. Problems of dire poverty, as exemplified by the least developed countries, were considered by many representatives as being one of the most important challenges facing mankind.

11. In carrying out its mandate the Conference was expected to ascertain, on the one hand, what the least developed countries themselves intended doing during the 1980s in order to achieve structural change and the satisfaction of the basic needs of their populations and, on the other hand, what support the international community could provide to help them embark on the path of self-sustained growth. The Substantial New Programme of Action should therefore reflect a dynamic balance between domestic measures and international support in a spirit of new-found solidarity.

12. The spokesman for the Group of 77 pointed out that the unacceptable poverty and misery in developing countries, including in particular the least developed countries, was the result of an historical process marked by the absence of human solidarity. While 200 years had passed between the French Revolution and the proclamation of the New International Economic Order, it was not possible to wait so long again for the NIEO to be put into effect. Underdevelopment was the price paid by the developing countries, the majority, to an elite group of nations which still avoided embarking on the dialogue with the third world that was justly demanded. The recent summit meeting at Ottawa and the forthcoming summit meeting at Cancún, which were intended to work out agreed positions with a view to the resumption of the North-South dialogue were looked upon with optimism. However, although the Ottawa Declaration had positive features as regards co-operation for the development of the least developed countries, it was not explicit enough and was difficult to reconcile with the repeated statements of developed countries that the programmes of all international assistance and support agencies must maintain zero growth rates. Should there be zero growth rates in assistance, there would inevitably be still less growth in the developing countries, particularly in the least developed. In view of the interdependence of the international economy, the worsening of the problems of the developing countries would clearly have adverse effects on the economies of the developed countries. Any decline in the purchasing power of the least developed countries would further lower their already severely constrained imports from the developed countries and accentuate the economic recession in those countries.

13. He noted that the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance had been met by only a few developed countries. Referring to the Ottawa Declaration, he stated that if it were to be viewed with optimism, then it must lead to a substantial increase in ODA from the countries that had subscribed to it. While aid was not the panacea for all the problems of the developing countries, it was extremely important and necessary, especially in present world economic conditions of falling prices and speculation in raw materials exported by

developing countries and of protectionist barriers of various kinds that were being erected against the manufactured and other exports of the developing countries. What was extremely alarming was the fact that per capita assistance flows on concessional terms to the least developed countries were stagnating and in some cases even declining. From the country presentations submitted to the review meetings, it could be estimated that the minimum total assistance requirements to implement the plans and programmes of the 31 least developed countries for the entire decade of the 1980s were some $US 134 billion in 1980 prices. For the period 1981-1985 this would represent a level of aid scarcely double in real terms that of 1979.

14. He also expressed the view, shared by the representatives of several developed market-economy countries, that the terms and conditions of aid and its modalities needed to be reviewed in certain cases so that the grant element could be increased, more local and recurrent cost financing undertaken and procedures improved.

15. The spokesman for the Group of 77 further stated that urgent commitments by the developed countries were required to meet the immediate action component of the Substantial New Programme of Action. Unless further substantial funds were allocated for this purpose, the outcome of the Substantial New Programme of Action would be jeopardized. He drew attention to the disappointment, necessity and realism that had led the developing countries to seek other ways to improve their economies. This was how the idea had arisen of South-South co-operation, most recently expressed in the Arusha Plan of Action. The lack of political will and the intransigent attitude of the developed nations in particular at the special session of the General Assembly on global negotiations had brought home the urgent need to activate the South-South dialogue and to introduce a system that would allow full development of economic co-operation among developing countries. The outcome of this concern was the adoption of the Programme of Action of the Group of 77 recently adopted by the High-Level Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries at Caracas, Venezuela, from 13 to 19 May 1981. 15/ That Programme of Action was ambitious but not illusory. Naturally enough, it made special reference to the situation of the least developed countries, stating that all developing countries should be in a position to benefit equitably, as practical proof of solidarity. In this regard, it also stated that special attention should be paid to the countries in greatest need, particularly the least developed countries, so that they could effectively participate in and benefit from programmes of economic co-operation among developing countries in all fields of such co-operation. The Programme of Action further stated that the success of the present Conference was therefore of particular importance to the Group of 77.

16. He elaborated on the various provisions contained in the Group of 77's draft Substantial New Programme of Action (A/CONF.104/L.2) relating to supportive measures, particularly those concerning the stabilization of export earnings, which had declined drastically, and to access to markets. The import difficulties of the least developed countries had been compounded by the fact that 70 per cent of their export earnings had to be devoted to imports of food and energy. One of the most positive and viable ways of achieving the objective of strengthening the economies of the least developed countries would be the introduction of a global system of trade preferences among developing countries. However, he regretted that the developed countries were trying to cut down on the support which they could and should give UNCTAD in this field.

17. He suggested that the establishment of arrangements for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Substantial New Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels should be one of the main results of the Conference. The effectiveness of these arrangements would be one of the yardsticks

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15/ For the report of this Conference see A/36/333.

of the success of the Conference. They should provide the members of the international community with regular opportunities to manifest in tangible ways their individual and collective commitment to support and review the development efforts of the least developed countries.

18. The representatives of a number of developing countries described their countries' efforts in economic and technical co-operation with the least developed countries and expressed their intention to continue to play an active part. In this regard a number of representatives referred to concrete measures their countries had so far undertaken, while others declared their intention of offering technical assistance.

19. The representatives of several developing countries, including those of the least developed countries, underlined the importance of an over-all upgrading of human resources in the least developed countries and supported an integrated approach to this effect by all countries and international agencies concerned. The representatives of some developing countries strongly expressed the view that concern for the least developed countries should not obscure the needs of the developing countries as a whole.

20. The representative of one developing country pointed to the relationship between the Substantial New Programme of Action and the weaknesses of least developed countries in communication and information. He urged that UNESCO's recommendation for people to be educated concerning their countries' development objectives and the preservation of their cultural identity should be followed. Structural reform for achieving authentic development was required.

21. To offset inflation that was affecting all developing countries, and the least developed countries in particular, reference was made to the establishment of an international fund which had become part of OPEC's strategy. Industrialized countries were invited to join the oil-producing countries in the establishment and operation of the Fund.

22. The representatives of least developed countries emphasized how urgent and vital it was for them to receive a substantially larger volume of external assistance. Without it, the Substantial New Programme of Action could not be implemented since it formed the very crux of the programme. Without massive investment structural changes would not be carried out and, hence, the trade gap of the least developed countries would not be narrowed appreciably. In view of the low income levels and lack of capital assets in the least developed countries, domestic resource mobilization in the next 10 years, the Substantial New Programme of Action could not be implemented. This was particularly so because of the outflow of resources from least developed countries as the result of worsening terms of trade, debt servicing and imported inflation. These deteriorating terms of trade due to the constant decline in the earnings from primary exports against the rising cost of essential manufactures and capital goods, had created an extremely critical situation. They stressed that the critical situation in their countries called for immediate assistance. The three important areas of concern which required immediate support were: substantial food deficits, resulting in high import bills; the critical energy situation, as well as the soaring inflation which had led to chronic balance-of-payments deficits; and the mounting cost of debt servicing.

23. It was recalled that in adopting the International Development Strategy the international community had agreed to double the aid flow to least developed countries immediately and take a firm decision on tripling and quadrupling it by 1984 and 1990 respectively in real terms. Least developed countries at present received less than 1% per cent of official development assistance and, were that figure to be 30 per cent, it would be the equivalent of merely 0.2 per cent of the gross national product of the rich developed countries.

24. It was noted that with such precedents the Conference could not be considered a success unless aid targets were quantified and time-bound. They should be supported by commitments and procedures that would ensure their effective implementation. In the view of the least developed countries, the external assistance to which the developed countries should commit themselves must be made available on a predictable, continuous and assured basis. Only in this manner would the least developed countries be able to integrate the inflow of external assistance with their domestic resources, arrive at internally consistent and balanced sectoral plans and not be compelled to halt project implementation when there were unexpected shortfalls in export earnings.

25. The commitments and targets that the least developed countries urged the developed countries to adopt in the context of the Substantial New Programme of Action were not unrealistic. Nor were they beyond the means of the rich countries. The investment objectives the least developed countries set for themselves in their country programmes were likewise realistic, based on a careful blend of development policies and socio-economic strategies. They took full account of the least developed countries' domestic capabilities in resource management and their capacities to make efficient use of the expected larger inflows of external assistance. The domestic resource mobilization effort envisaged by the least developed countries was actually twice the increase expected in external resources. This reflected the increased efforts that these countries were willing to undertake to contribute to the solution of their own problems. Therefore, the least developed countries' absorptive capacities should cease to be a constraint to their development if the assistance they asked from rich developed countries were forthcoming in the desired volume, quality and timing.

26. In the context of absorptive capacity, it was essential that adequate aid should be supplied in the form of food aid and the means to increase imports of development goods. The present inability to import the irreducible minimum was having adverse consequences such as low capacity utilization in industry due to lack of spares and raw materials. Important social programmes were also seriously jeopardized.

27. While donor countries were urged to increase substantially their resource transfers to the least developed countries, it was extremely important that multilateral organizations should have a more sympathetic attitude as well in meeting the financial and technical assistance needs of these countries. A significant part of total assistance flows was obtained through such agencies and therefore it was essential that they be urged to devote a large proportion of their resources to the least developed countries.

28. The representatives of some least developed countries considered that disaster relief aid should not be counted in total financial assistance as it was given to rehabilitate and reconstruct the economy and restore it to the level previous to a natural disaster, i.e. the disaster relief was not used for short or long-term structural changes within the aim of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

29. The representatives of some least developed countries expressed their concern with regard to the suspension of aid to their countries by some donor countries and international financial institutions and urged them to reconsider their position.

30. The representatives of least developed countries stated that an improvement in the quality and an increase in the volume of aid was crucial to the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. Apart from an increase in grants and concessional loans, more flexible and simplified procedures and improved administration and management of aid were necessary. The representatives of some least developed countries also pointed out that actual needs rather than the per capita concept should be the criterion used for the provision and allocation of aid.

31. The representatives of several least developed countries called for Stabex-type compensatory arrangements to be extended to all such countries and for the Common Fund for Commodities and its Second Account to be made operational.

32. It was stated by many delegations, particularly those of developing countries, that UNCTAD should be the focal point for global monitoring of the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. The representatives of developing countries proposed that the monitoring function should be carried out through a distinct intergovernmental mechanism, starting soon after the Conference, and that there should be a mid-decade review at a United Nations Conference to be convened for this purpose. They said that the UNCTAD Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries should act as a preparatory body for these global reviews.

33. The representative of China stated that the developed countries should provide least developed countries with economic and technical assistance on concessional terms. International economic and technical exchanges on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, equity and fair treatment would not only be beneficial to the third-world countries but would also be helpful to the developed countries in their effort to overcome their economic difficulties. They would also help boost the world economy, stabilize the international situation and defend world peace.

34. He added that it would be an arduous, long-term task to establish the New International Economic Order. However, so long as the North adopted a sensible attitude and took into full consideration the just positions of the South, it would be possible to establish gradually a fair international economic relationship on the basis of a North-South dialogue. Economic Co-operation Among Developing Countries and Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries would make valuable contributions to this cause.

35. China advocated peaceful co-existence and equal treatment among peoples of various countries and was resolutely opposed to the practice in international relations of the strong bullying the weak and seeking hegemony.

36. China was still fairly backward in its economy, yet as a developing socialist country it had been providing modest economic and technical assistance within its capabilities to friendly countries of the third world including least developed countries in the light of its Eight Principles governing aid to other countries. China strictly respected the sovereignty of the recipient countries and the loans it extended were interest-free. Should a recipient country find it difficult to repay a loan when the repayment was due, China would agree to extend the time-limit and would on no account press for the repayment. That was mutual assistance on an

equal footing among poor friends, aimed at promoting each other's self-reliance capabilities and independent development. At present, 25 of the 31 least developed countries had good relations of economic and technical co-operation with China. With the progress of its modernization programme, China would be able to make greater contributions to the economic growth of least developed countries and other friendly third world countries.

37. Representatives of developed market-economy countries, while welcoming the convening of the Conference on this vital subject, recalled that their countries had for many years been taking special steps in a number of different fields to take account of the particular needs of the least developed countries. The interest of the proposed Substantial New Programme of Action lay in the opportunity it provided for a constructive combination of internal policies and external measures in which both elements could be adapted to the real needs of the populations of the least developed countries. The tragic situation of those countries was a problem which concerned the international community as a whole, and representatives of many developed market-economy countries expressed keen regret that the socialist countries had so far taken measures which bore no relation either to their own potential or to the size of the needs of the least developed countries. They also expressed the hope that developing countries in a position to do so would also take measures to support the Substantial New Programme of Action. Although the economic climate was unfavourable for many countries, that was no reason for delaying the action required.

38. Representatives of several developed market-economy countries drew attention to the fact that the situations of individual least developed countries were highly diversified and required specific rather than global action. They also pointed out that many serious problems were also shared by countries not on the list of least developed countries. In this context a few representatives drew attention to the regional emphasis of their aid programmes. A few representatives of the developed market-economy countries also underlined the importance of keeping the list under review to ensure that it corresponded to realities.

39. What the least developed countries had in common was a fundamental deficiency in physical infrastructure, in skilled manpower and in administrative and managerial capabilities. Representatives of several developed market-economy countries drew attention to the role of inappropriate domestic policies as a partial cause of the low level of development of the least developed countries. Among the factors inhibiting development, several mentioned insufficient attention to the mobilization and utilization of national and domestic financial resources and to the development of human resources, as well as inappropriate exchange rate and other policies that tended to over-protect industry and hold back agriculture. In their view, internal policy reform and improved management by least developed countries were essential elements without which concessional aid would be ineffective in promoting development. The importance of correct priorities in food and agriculture, small-scale industry, population policies, health, nutrition, education and energy development in least developed countries was also underlined. Some representatives stated that environmental changes had had direct and serious effects on the development efforts of the least developed countries. They also drew attention to the difficulties caused for many of those countries by natural disasters and the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries.

40. Representatives of developed market economy countries pointed out that the members of the Development Assistance Committee of OECD had expanded their official development assistance to the least developed countries by annual average rate of 7 per cent in real terms during the last five years, as compared to 3 per cent for official development assistance to all developing countries. This aid was equivalent in 1979 to almost half of the gross investment in these countries. Several countries reaffirmed their commitment to the over-all target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance to developing countries. Many representatives of these countries indicated that the greatest part, and in many cases the totality, of their aid to least developed countries was in the form of grants or loans on highly concessional terms. Many representatives expressed the readiness of their countries to be more flexible in the modalities of aid to least developed countries.

41. Representatives of developed market economy countries explained the preferential treatment their countries were already granting, or during the Conference had agreed to grant, to the exports of the least developed countries, notably through the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Many of them expressed the willingness of their countries to support the expansion of the exports of least developed countries, in particular through measures of trade promotion and preferential access to their markets - the latter including duty-free entry and the abolition of ceilings and other non-trade barriers. Some of these representatives also indicated their countries' willingness to consider schemes for stabilizing the export earnings of the least developed countries and their support for commodity agreements such as the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities.

42. In relation to the specific measures to be taken in favour of the least developed countries, representatives of a number of developed market-economy countries stressed the importance of basing development action on local initiative wherever possible. A number of them referred to the importance of paying proper attention to the role of women in the development process. Some in particular emphasized the importance of mobilizing human resources and improving social conditions. The role of non-governmental organizations in implementing development activities was also stressed. Other measures mentioned by various representatives of developed market-economy countries as being of particular importance included food security and effective follow-up of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy.

43. The new and additional measures by developed market-economy countries in favour of least developed countries announced at the Conference included the following: (a) new contributions to the UNDP Special Measures Fund for Least Developed Countries (Denmark: D.Kr.15 million, or approximately $2 million; Norway: N. Kr. 15 million, or approximately $2.5 million; Sweden: Sw.K. 45 million, or approximately $9 million over three years) or to UNDP, including the Special Measures Fund (Finland: 14 per cent increase); (b) new contributions to the United Nations Capital Development Fund (Norway: N.Kr. 25 million, or approximately $4 million; Finland: a near-doubling of its present contribution); (c) additional funds for least developed countries in general (Australia $A 1 million in multilateral funds; Austria: $2 million in bilateral or multilateral grants) or in particular areas (Canada: $25 million to Sahel countries); (d) new approaches to certain sectors of importance to least developed countries (Canada: major programme of energy research and establishment of a special institution for energy assistance; Finland: a doubling of its contribution to IFAD; Netherlands: special sub-programme to help

developing countries attain food security; United Kingdom: new initiatives in agriculture, population, water and energy); or to particular aid channels (Canada: funding of a special meeting between non-governmental organizations and their least developed country counterparts); (c) increases in over-all official development assistance (France: intention of reaching 0.7 per cent of gross national product to independent developing countries in 1988 at the latest; Norway: intention of reaching 1.3 per cent of gross national product by 1985); (f) allocation of 0.15 per cent of gross national product to least developed countries (Belgium and France by 1985, Ireland and Italy by 1990); (g) changes in commercial policies (Canada: improvement to generalized system of preferences scheme and other measures).

44. Regarding follow-up to the Conference itself, the developed market-economy countries felt that existing arrangements (such as those operated by the World Bank, UNDP or the Club du Sahel) should form the basis for review and implementation at the country level, while UNCTAD was seen as having a focal role at the global level, in close consultation and co-operation with all relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations system.

45. The representatives of socialist countries 16/ stressed that the specific problems of the least developed countries were an integral part of the general problem of developing countries. It was therefore evident that the quest for solutions to the particularly difficult economic situation of the least developed countries was a part of the task of restructuring international economic relations on a democratic and just basis.

46. In their view, the present world situation once again confirmed that the prospects for international economic co-operation and the advancement of developing countries, including the least developed countries, along the path of social and economic development depended on progress made in strengthening world peace and security, implementing effective measures of real disarmament and normalizing international relations on the basis of the principles of peaceful co-existence between States having different social systems.

47. They stated that their countries had done their best to curb the arms race, to diminish tension, and to preserve and widen détente. In this connection the representative of the USSR stated that it was for those purposes that the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had put forward a new set of specific peace initiatives known as the Peace Programme for the 1980s. That Programme was widely supported by the peoples and governments of many States.

48. They considered that the most important prerequisite for overcoming the least developed countries' economic backwardness was radical progressive social and economic transformation, including the introduction or improvement of economic and social planning, the development of the public and co-operative sectors of the

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16/ For the purposes of this report, the expression "socialist countries" refers to Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Soviet Union.

national economy, democratic land reforms, the active mobilization of domestic resources for development, taking into account the interests of the working people, the creation of progressive social infrastructures, full national sovereignty over their natural resources, and the restraint and control of the activities of transnational corporations. The approach of socialist countries to the solution of the problems of economic and social development of the least developed countries had been set out at UNCTAD V in document TD/264 and Corr.1. 17/

49. In their view external aid could play an important complementary role, provided that the sovereignty and discretionary powers of the recipient country were respected in conformity with the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. They shared the view that international efforts could only be effective when based on the national development programmes of the least developed countries.

50. They stated that the volume of the economic and technical co-operation of their countries with the least developed countries had been growing steadily and that socialist countries assisted the least developed countries in expanding their industrial, scientific and technical potentials, developing the agricultural sector and increasing food production, establishing national education systems, training national personnel as well as increasing employment. Under the agreements in force between the USSR and the least developed countries on economic and technical assistance 427 projects were in hand, 200 of which were already finished and in operation. Some 200,000 nationals of the least developed countries had completed their studies at institutions of higher education or had undertaken skilled workers' training or further training courses with the assistance of socialist countries.

51. Trade relations with the least developed countries, which were being conducted mostly on the basis of long-term trade agreements were developing in a dynamic way. Thus, during the past decade (1971-1980) the turnover of the USSR with the least developed countries had increased five-fold. Estimates indicated that the average annual growth rates of the trade turnover of the USSR with the least developed countries as a whole could be at least 6-9 per cent during the period up to 1990. The volume of economic and technical co-operation between the USSR and the least developed countries had increased 1.8 times during the past five years and during 1981-1985 would increase more than twofold and would continue to increase approximately at the same rate until 1990. Socialist countries would continue to assist the least developed countries in expanding their export earnings. They understood the real difficulties of many land-locked and island least developed countries and were ready to take those difficulties into account in the future within the framework of bilateral trade and economic co-operation. Socialist countries also rendered to the least developed countries long-term public loans on concessional terms. As for the Soviet Union, the total sum of these loans had increased threefold from 1971 to 1980, and now amounted to billions of roubles. The representative of the USSR referred to document A/CONF.104/17, submitted by his delegation, on "The major results of and the future trends in co-operation between the USSR and the least developed countries in the commercial, economic, scientific and technical fields".

17/ Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fifth session, vol. I, Report and Annexes (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.79.II.D.14 (TD/269 (vol. I)).

52. The representatives of socialist countries stressed the fact that at present there existed in the world not only two socio-economic systems, but two fundamentally different bases of economic relations with the developing countries. Relations maintained by the socialist States with developing countries, including the least developed countries, were fundamentally different in nature, objectives, forms and methods from those maintained with them by capitalist industrialized countries. For that reason, too, any recommendations of the Conference should not be formulated by mechanically extending schemes and provisions typical for the capitalist economic system to the relations between least developed countries and socialist countries.

53. They stressed that their countries would continue to shape their multifaceted co-operation and solidarity with the least developed countries according to the principles which corresponded to their socio-economic order and met the legitimate interests of the partners concerned.

54. As for the follow-up of the Conference, the representatives of socialist countries expressed the view that all the potential and the means at the disposal of the United Nations system should be harnessed and that the co-ordinating role of UNCTAD within its field of competence, should be preserved. It should be possible for the existing United Nations agencies and bodies to perform the tasks agreed by the Conference in an effective and co-ordinated manner.

VIII. Consideration of the reports of the individual country review meetings (agenda item 9) 18/

IX. Finalization and adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries (agenda item 10) 18/

X. Closing statement by the President of the Conference 18/

18/ Issued separately in A/CONF.104/22/Add.1.